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DIRT ACTION

ISSUE 214
MAY 2017

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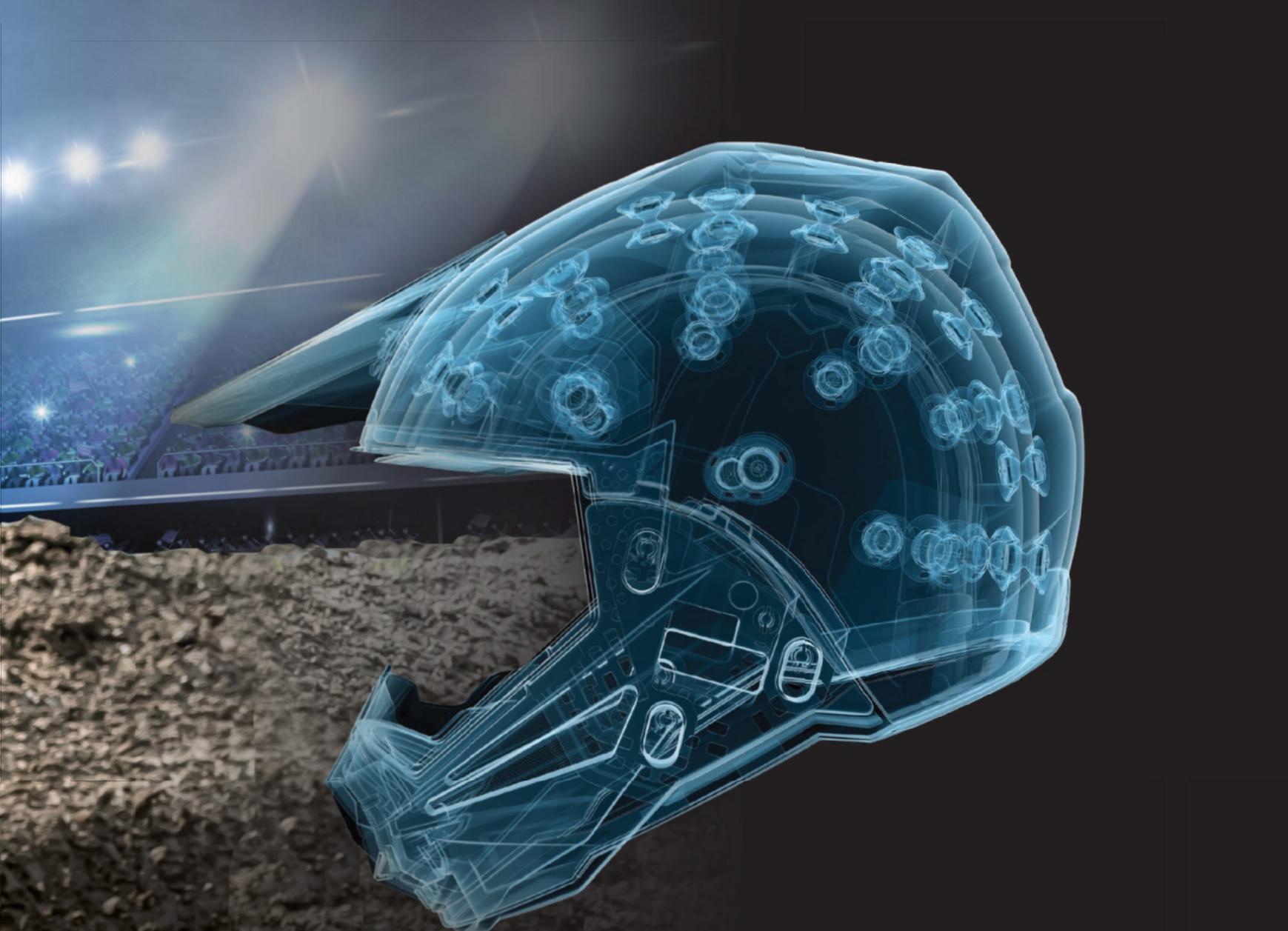
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CODY DYCE

PHOTO ASHENHURST

Yamalube Yamaha Racing's Cody Dyce nailed his first proper photo shoot like a total pro. The photo says everything it needs to say, really: he came into this sweeping berm on the corner and destroyed it!





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Scott Bishop is really feeling it this time round

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LUKE STYKE

PHOTO ASHENHURST

Styke is back. After a rough 2016 that saw him grounded through injury, the former MX2 champ and MXGP rider will be looking to make up for lost time in 2017. Styke at his best is a determined and fearsome rider. He can win in sand or on hard pack and if he gets a sniff of the podium it'll be tough for anyone to stop him taking it.





THE
POWER
SHOT



ELI TOMAC

PHOTO DOUGLAS TURNEY

In our pre-season predictions we named Tomac as the man to beat if he just found that first win. It took longer than he'd have hoped but Eli most definitely found his groove, scored wins and showed he could sustain incredible speed and good starts for multiple rounds. The beast is loose.





J-MART'S PODIUM DEBUT AT DAYTONA

... WHILE DUNGEY & TOMAC TAKE THE CHAMPIONSHIP TO THE WIRE

Two-time American 250 Motocross champion Jeremy Martin has had a rough go on the 250 regional supercross circuit the past few years. It continued in 2017 with a combination of bad starts and crashes, leaving Geico Honda's pre-season 250 West title contender well and truly out of the championship points race as the West Coast class headed for the mid-season break.

With Ken Roczen currently sidelined due to a horrific arm injury, the factory Honda racing team called up Martin to fill in at the Honda Daytona Supercross event. Martin made the most of the opportunity, showing his future worth in the premier class of racing. After qualifying second fastest, he took the long path to the main event after a heat race crash.

When the gates dropped on the 20-lap main event, Martin rocketed to the lead and held off Factory Kawasaki's Eli Tomac for the opening 12 laps before going on to cross the line in second position.

Up front, the win for Tomac, followed by another win the following weekend at Indianapolis, cut his deficit to the championship points leader, Red Bull KTM's Ryan Dungey, to just 12 points as the series heads into the final few rounds of racing.

For the sole Aussie in the SX class, Chad Reed, it's been a mixed bag of results since his second-place finish at Phoenix early in the season. A combination of small mistakes and crashes plus some top-five results puts the former two-time champion in eighth position as the series starts to wind down.



GARDINER TO TACKLE 2017 EURO & FRENCH CHAMP'SHIPS

Former three-time Australian Off-Road Champion Jessica Gardiner will contest both the FIM European Championships as well as the Championnat de France d'Enduro (French Enduro Championship) in 2017.

Gardiner is no stranger to the French enduro scene, having taken part in selected rounds back in 2013 and 2014 where she went undefeated in every race she contested.

With support from Yamaha Motor Australia along with Yamaha Motor Europe and Philip Motos Saint-Étienne, Gardiner has signed a one-year deal to race both series aboard a Yamaha WR250F. The 24-year-old also hopes to race either all or selected rounds of the World Enduro Championship and has plans to once again be part of the all-conquering Australian Women's ISDE team.

"I'm super excited to be heading back to Europe again to race in both series," she said. "It's taken a bit of time and a lot of hours to make this whole project fall into place but finally it's official and

now I can start focusing on trying to get the best results possible when both championships get underway.

"I'm really grateful for all the great support from my sponsors who have stayed on board and looking forward to working with all my new sponsors throughout the year.

"I'll do the opening round of the World Championship and see what happens after that in regard to the budget side of things. I would like to be able to do the whole series but, as the championship rounds are a long way from each other, it will be hard to be able to do them all. But we'll see what happens.

"One way to prove I have what it takes to be the best is to have a crack at this fulltime. My fulltime job, JK Williams, has been super supportive and they are allowing me the six months off to go to Europe and contest these series and have a full go at trying to win these championships.

"I'm very excited for it and really looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead in the coming months."



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GAJSER & SEEWER TOP EARLY-SEASON MXGP STANDINGS

The opening three rounds of the 2017 World Motocross Championship (MXGP) have seen riders tackle some of the most diverse conditions they're likely to see this year.

Kicking off under the lights of Qatar, it was Italian motocross legend Antonio Cairoli who led the way aboard his KTM 450 SX in the MXGP class, winning both

races to take the early-season points lead from reigning champion Tim Gajser of HRC Honda.

At round two, riders faced swamp-like conditions when the series headed to Indonesia in the mist of the wet season. After a downpour hit the venue before the event even got underway, riders faced a shortened format on Saturday

before things took a turn for the worse on Sunday with the MXGP class only able to complete the opening moto before race two was cancelled.

The big winner from the shortened event was Great Britain's Shaun Simpson, who was declared the round winner after taking the win in the opening moto.

The series returned to some form of normality at round three in Argentina where Tim Gajser showed he was ready to defend the championship he won in 2016, winning both motos on his way to capturing the championship lead ahead

of Cairoli. Monster Energy Kawasaki's Clement Desalle sits third in the standings after the opening three rounds.

In the MX2 class, KTM's Pauls Jonass has proved the rider to beat in the dry, winning both motos in Qatar and again at round three in Argentina. However, only able to score seven points at the waterlogged Indonesian round, Jonass sits second in the championship standings, three points down on Factory Suzuki's Jeremy Seewer who's been the most consistent rider across the opening six motos of the year.



MIXED BAG FOR AUSSIE MX2 HOPEFULS

While there are no Australian riders contesting the MXGP class in 2017, Hunter Lawrence, Caleb Ward and Jay Wilson are all regulars in the MX2 class this season and all have had mixed results across the opening three rounds.

Lawrence got his season off to a flier at the opening round in Qatar, qualifying sixth. Despite a crash in the opening moto of the year, the Australian was able to rebound and pick up an 18th-place finish, scoring his first world championship points in the process. He then went on to record a superb sixth place finish in moto two.

Round two proved to be a tough mudder for Hunter as he scored just three points at the rain-soaked round in Indonesia before crashes dominated both of his races at round three, where he finished with 13-18 moto results for 18th overall in Argentina.

Husqvarna-mounted Caleb Ward came into the season fighting an unknown virus and things took a turn for the worse at the opening round when a crash on Saturday ruled him out of racing on Sunday. He rebounded in round two, scoring a seventh-

place moto finish in the mud, before another crash on Saturday in Argentina ruled him out of racing at the third round.

New dad Jay Wilson has shown continual improvement and the most consistency of the Australian contingent so far. Finishing well outside a points-scoring position in both motos at the opening round in Qatar, Wilson picked up his first world championship point in Indonesia and then narrowly missed out on picking up more world championship points in Argentina, finishing 21st in the opening moto and 22nd in moto two.

Nathan Crawford, Aaron Tanti and Kyle Webster all took advantage of wild-card entries in the ill-fated Indonesian round of the MX2 championship. For Crawford, things ended before they started when the Australia withdrew from the event before it kicked off.

Aaron Tanti was consistent despite the trying conditions, picking up a single point in the opening race to finish in 20th position. He backed that result up with 22nd in race two. Webster recorded a DNF in both races.

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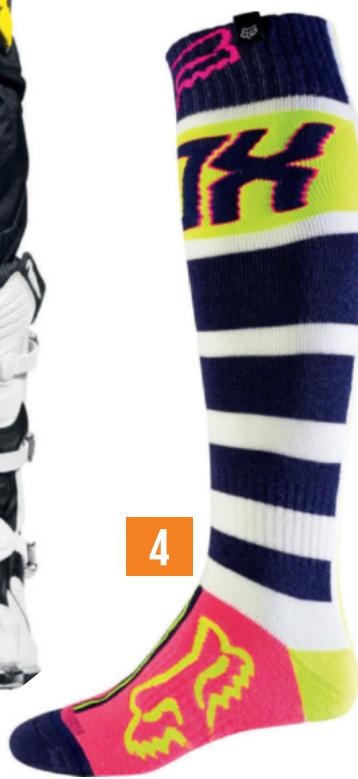


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MOTOR MOUTH

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8. RTECH R15 WORX BIKE STAND
9. GOPRO HANDLEBAR MOUNT
10. OGIO RIG 9800 MOSSY OAK GEAR BAG



MOTOR MOUTH

TWEETS OF THE MONTH

"FYI, 450ft is doable, 650ft is not! Why is @travispastrana such a bad influence on me?"

— KEVIN WINDHAM



"PUMPED TO RIDE WITH RICK JOHNSON, HE'S AN ALL-TIME LEGEND! WE'RE AT THE ANNUAL @ KTM_RACING ADVENTURE RIDE!"

— TOBY PRICE

WHO SAID WHAT?

THE BEST QUOTES, JIBES, JOKES AND QUIPS FROM THE TWITTERVERSE



"Don't treat people as bad as they are
... Treat them as good as you are!!!"

— JUSTIN BARCIA

JASON ANDERSON
"FOUND OUT WE ARE DOIN'
20 LAPS INSTEAD OF 20MIN.
LOVE HOW ALL THESE FORMAT
CHANGES ARE MADE WITHOUT
ANY INPUT FROM THE RACERS."

ADAM CIANCIARULO
"I JUST FOUND THIS OUT
TOO. WEIRD."

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— RICKY CARMICHAEL

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Kawasaki



SCOTT BISHOP

BIO:

Scott Bishop is the most experienced dirtbike test dummy in Australia and perhaps the world. He's tested everything that's won, lost, blew up, blew smoke, holeshot or high-sided since DIRT ACTION began. These days Scott runs the GYTR Yamaha Yamalube race team in the MXD class and spends his time building bikes and riders.

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PAIN & GLORY

WORLD'S GREATEST SPORTING INJURY

Is the greatest sporting injury a burnt tongue from a meat pie cooked at 2000 degrees in a pie warmer at the local canteen? My answer is yes and it's common to every sport in Australia. I have burnt my hands on exhausts, on hot shocks and on brake rotors but nothing is a bad as the knock-on effect of trying to eat an overcooked pie.

It starts when you cautiously take your first bite. In an instant you know it's way too hot to handle. Your body tenses up like you've been stung by a scorpion and your fist clenches. That in turn squeezes the raging lava inside the pie they call meat and it starts to run down your hands. So now your mouth is on fire and your hand is blistering as you look at it – all because some genius in some government bureau has made a rule that all pie warmers must be set to 2000 degrees or the pie is unsafe to eat.

I'll give you unsafe! My last pie injury took me weeks to recover from. I couldn't taste any food for a month as my tongue was either singed or numb from the pie abuse. My hands were rendered useless for a week and the only bright side was that I wasn't sitting in a car and the pie lava didn't fall into my lap and set fire to my johnson.

I've since slapped a pie ban on myself until some genius can sort this whole mess out. I refuse to continue to be the world's pie temperature tester until they get some safer parameters in place. Surely they can try it on mice or a rat or monkey before they unleash it on me.

MX NATS

It's all go in the 2017 season and, by the time you read this, a few rounds of the MX Nationals will have been run and won. The racing industry in Australia is battling through some tough times but the effort and the presentation teams go to now in Australia is impressive.

The MX1 championship is shaping up to be a repeat of last year with Ferris, Gibbs and Waters the major players. At times last year they were night and day ahead of the field and raced at what was truly a world level.

The questions this year are: Who is going to be able to step up and match them? Can Kyle Peters run up the front for a full 30 minutes? Will Nathan Crawford make a successful jump to the premier class? Who will Kawasaki have to partner Crawford with as, at the time of writing, Tonkov hadn't set foot on a plane headed for Australia? Can Kade Mosig regain 2015 form?

The MX2 class looks to have a good spread of competitors and all in similar age brackets. Most of these riders have grown up racing one another so it will be an interesting year to see who comes out on top.

The early-season favourites would have to be Egan Mastin, Wilson Todd, Jackson Richardson and Jayden Rykers but Kyle Webster has shown impressive pre-season speed, as have Mitch Evans and Dylan Wills.

Mastin is two-stroke mounted so it will be interesting to see if the two-versus-four rivalry starts again like it did a few seasons ago.

INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS

The past few years have been good for Australian riders getting a gig overseas. Reardon, Mellross and Clout all secured rides in the US while Hunter Lawrence, Jed Beaton, Jay Wilson and Caleb Ward are all trying to get themselves established in Europe.

Obviously Clout has returned home but both Reardon and Mellross have some roots in the US and are trying to continue racing there. Mellross looked good at the opening rounds only to have his results ruined by mechanic issues or crashes. But I think he's done enough to show he deserves a good ride over there and he's continuing to develop as a rider.

Reardon is at the other end of the scale age-wise but Dan seems determined to keep racing at the highest level in supercross and has certainly shown he's competitive and is holding his position well. Dan doesn't really want to race motocross – supercross is his passion – so I expect Dan to try to work on deals that enable him to race supercross around the world.

The boys in Europe have been doing it tough: riding through a freezing off-season before racing the opening rounds in furnace-like conditions in Asia must be a shock to the system. Lawrence has shown he's the real deal and before long will be competing for round podiums. That kid can ride.

The rest will need some time to adjust but all are talented athletes and great ambassadors for Australian MX. Go get 'em, boys! 



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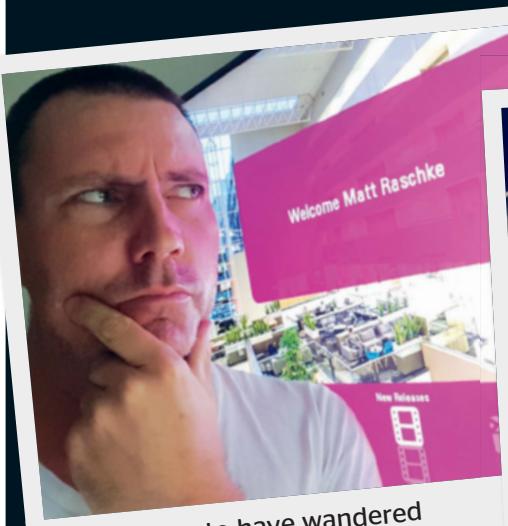
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AN INSIDE VIEW OF THE BACKWARDS STUFF
WE DO OUTSIDE AND IN



Damo seems to have wandered into the wrong hotel room



The actual Australian launch bike for the YZ400F. Yes, it was a wooden cutout and it changed the world



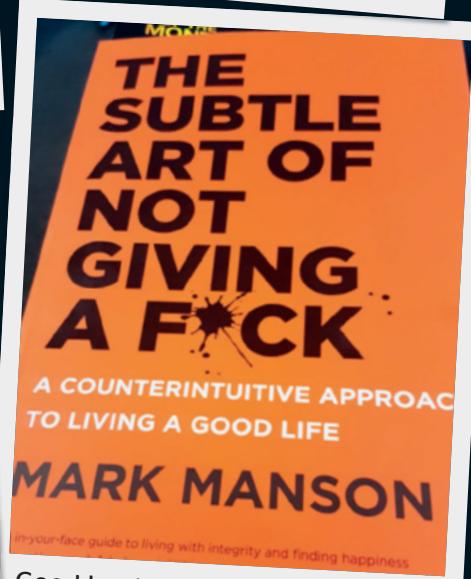
The SAAB 340 airplane is pretty much a Pringles can with wings



Cycle Torque's Nigel Patterson and DIRT ACTION's founder Barry Ashenhurst, most likely complaining about the price of airport coffee



The handiwork of a Subway sandwich artist. Obviously a fan of Picasso



Good book to have handy when flying Jetstar



Scott Bishop busted playing with his tool



Sometimes getting hopelessly lost is the most fun of all



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ABOUT MX
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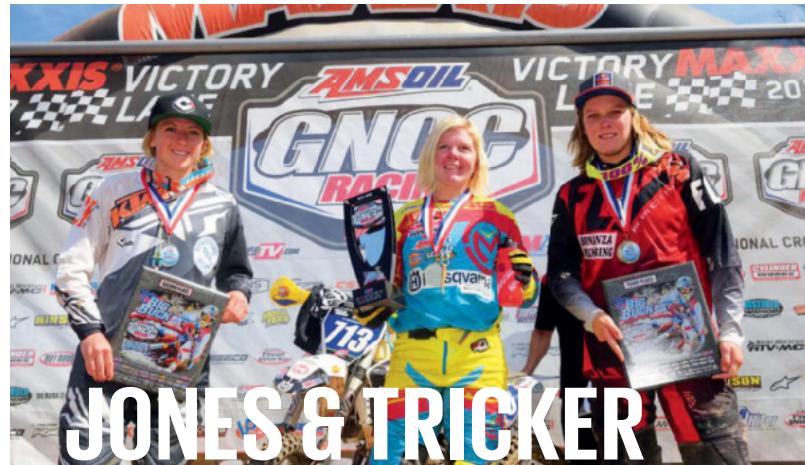
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JONES & TRICKER ON FIRE IN US

Both Tayla Jones and Mackenzie Tricker have been on fire early in the 2017 American Off-Road Championships, both scoring race wins and currently sitting at the pointy end of multiple championships.

They went head to head at the opening round of the Kenda Full Gas Enduro Sprint Series in South Carolina, Tricker leading at the end of the first day before Jones was able to come through and take the win at the end of the final test on Sunday.

KTM-mounted Tricker reversed the result in round two, taking a 29-second win over Jones, while American Becca Sheets rounded out the podium.

Continuing the Australian dominance, Husqvarna-mounted Jones turned her attention to the Grand National Cross Country Championship (GNCC), winning the opening two rounds of the championship. She took round one ahead of Sheets with Tricker in third,

before Tricker was able to move up one position the following weekend to finish behind Jones with Sheets in third.

For fellow Australian Josh Strang, his bid for the outright GNCC title started in the best possible fashion as the Factory Rockstar Husqvarna racer secured the opening holeshot of the season at the Big Buck GNCC. However, the lead was short lived for the Aussie as a lingering ankle injury forced him to slow his pace before he eventually pulled out of the race, but not before stopping to help out a fallen XC2 competitor.

Up front it was KTM's Steward Baylor Jr who took his maiden GNCC win ahead of reigning champion Kailub Russell, with former motocross and supercross rider Ryan Sipes in third.

At round two, Russell was able to turn the tables and claim the race win and in doing so secured the championship points lead.



HUSQVARNA STEPS UP DOMESTIC RACING EFFORT

Husqvarna Australia has announced 21 factory support rides for season 2017 across motocross and junior motocross, off-road, desert and dirt track disciplines, as well as the host of dealers in the Husqvarna Dealer Support program who've agreed to provide the critical developmental pathway as riders pursue their dreams of a factory ride.

In addition to the high-profile SD3 team of Brett Metcalfe, Luke Arbon and Kaleb Barham (Full Throttle Motorcycles) announced earlier, the brand will field two factory-supported FC350 riders in the premier class, Zak Small (Mega Motorcycles) and Kurt Gow (Nowra Motorcycles).

Dylan Wills (Synef Racing) will join Arbon in MX2 while Husqvarna's commitment to MXD will again be strong with Barham joined by Riley Dukes (R&D Husqvarna), Jy Roberts (Robertson's MC Dubbo) and Justin Hart (MPE).

Husqvarna's Factory Junior Squad will be coordinated by former Queensland professional Nathan Crawford and will see Bailey Malkiewicz (Moto GC), Reid Taylor (Rock MC), Zachary Watson (JR's MC) and Tye Jones (Redline Motorsport) share duties across their individual state races as well as national-level motocross events.

Out in the great outdoors, Husqvarna's reputation as one of the big hitters and improvers in AORC and Enduro-X looks

safe in the hands of factory riders like Lachlan Stanford and Broc Graham, while extreme enduro specialist Mitch Harper (Moto GC) and 17-year-old rising star Fraser Higlett will add even more firepower and excitement to the lineup.

South Australian Ivan Long will take on the wide-open spaces of desert racing on his Husqvarna FC450 while 50-year-old dirt-track legend Paul Caslick will oversee two of the most frighteningly fast emerging talents in the sideways sport: Max Croker and Billy Van Erde.

"The brand with the longest history and richest tradition in off-road motorcycling prides itself on identifying and nurturing Australian young talent – and a couple of talents who are less young – and 2017 looks like being our best season yet across all disciplines," said HQVA national brand manager Jon Hafey.

"Our off-road squad drips quality and potential, our motocross lineup provides depth of representation across all three classes, our dirt trackers are wiser, stronger and faster and we'll have a dedicated desert racer for the first time. I can't wait to see it all unfold!"

"Our program is also a credit to the host of dealers who have seized the opportunity to participate in the Husqvarna Dealer Support program as a platform for their business."



MX SPORTS & YOUTHSTREAM TO HOST ANNUAL USGP

On the eve of the Daytona Supercross, MX Sports Pro Racing revealed a strategic partnership with Youthstream, organisers of the FIM Motocross World Championship (MXGP), to provide cooperative support surrounding the USGP, one of the key stops of the world championship.

MX Sports Pro Racing's cooperative support of the USGP will help usher in a new era for the sport's global footprint.

For the past two seasons, MXGP has made the overseas trip to bring Europe's finest racers on to US soil and close out the championship alongside the biggest names in American motocross. This new strategic alliance will begin this season with the 17th round of the championship on Labor Day weekend, September 2-3, and will continue for years to come at a circuit yet to be announced.

"Bringing Youthstream and MX Sports Pro Racing together for the USGP will

ensure that event enjoys continued success and becomes a fixture on the global racing calendar," said Youthstream VP David Luongo.

"No one knows the sport of motocross and its illustrious history in America better than the Coombs family and that expertise will help make the USGP a new motocross tradition for fans to celebrate, bringing the planet's best riders together in one place for a true showcase of this incredible sport."

In addition to the USGP, MX Sports Pro Racing will also serve as a cooperative partner to Youthstream in bringing the legendary FIM Motocross of Nations to the US every four to five years.

"Since the final chequered flag flew at Ironman Raceway last August, MX Sports Pro Racing has diligently worked to enhance the scope of

American motocross for 2017 and beyond," said MX Sports Pro Racing president Davey Coombs.

"Renewing our partnership with AMA Pro Racing will allow us to continue to build on our vision of the Lucas Oil Pro Motocross Championship for the foreseeable future, continuing to make the world's most prestigious championship entertaining for our current fan base while also pushing to make the sport more appealing to a new, larger audience."

"Moreover, welcoming a new strategic relationship with Youthstream presents an exciting opportunity to create some unity between MXGP and American motocross, enhancing the presence of both the USGP and the Motocross of Nations by showcasing the sport's true international scope."



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Husqvarna
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The second annual KTM Australia Adventure Rallye took place in the Blue Mountains/Upper Hunter region of New South Wales from March 5-10.

This year, 194 riders savoured the five-night journey which started and finished at Wisemans Ferry, in the foothills of the iconic Blue Mountains in NSW, traversing between 250km and 300km per day of the best trails NSW has to offer.

The route was planned to highlight the incredible landscapes of the region as well as provide some sneaky breakout routes to test the skills and reward those who dared.

Riders were given a very special treat when Australia's – and possibly the world's – favourite adventure rider Toby Price made a guest appearance on day one at Jenolan Caves in what was his first

ride back after his Dakar injury. The treat then went on for four more days when Toby had so much fun with the group and on his bike he stayed for the entire week and got to ride with everyone.

"It's been so much fun on the KTM Australia Adventure Ride," enthused Toby. "There have been plenty of epic trails and I've been riding with some awesome people who love riding their pride and joy – just like me!"

Two New Zealanders, one Irishman and seven Americans took part in the ride, which made things all the more interesting as one of the Americans turned out to be Ricky Johnson, the multiple AMA motocross and supercross champion who ruled supreme in the era when KTM Australia's own Jeff Leisk was making it big on the world stage.



JARVIS WINS HELL'S GATE

Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing's Graham Jarvis has cemented his place in the Hell's Gate record books by claiming a fifth event win.

Earning a hard-fought victory at the 2017 edition of the one-day Tuscan race, the recent Ales Trem winner finished more than four minutes ahead of Travis Teasdale at the end of the three-hour main race.

"It's been a great event for me," he said. "Winning the morning qualifying race was a bit of a surprise.

I just made sure I didn't make any mistakes and that was good enough to get the win.

"In the main race I got a good start but dropped behind Wade Young, who was running a really strong pace. He had some kind of a problem then which allowed me to get ahead. I just kept a steady pace going then and things worked out great.

"There was a lot more man-made sections this year, which isn't really my thing. But to get a fifth Hell's Gate win is great."

KTM TO INJECT SOMETHING NEW INTO EXC RANGE

KTM is all set to unleash fuel-injected two-strokes on the market when the Austrian manufacturer's 2018 EXC lineup hits dealer floors.

It has been no secret that KTM's R&D department in Mattighofen, Austria, has been developing this technology, which offers considerable benefits over carbureted models including drastically reduced fuel consumption and removing the need to premix fuel or alter the jetting.

Not only that, the new two-stroke TPI (Transfer Port Injection) models are set to offer a completely new experience in terms of power delivery and rideability. It demonstrates once again KTM's commitment to its off-road roots, following on from the all-new generation of enduro machines released last year.

While information is limited at this time, more information is set to be unveiled at an international media launch that begins on May 15, 2017.



"This is an incredibly exciting development for KTM," said KTM Product Marketing Manager Joachim Sauer. "We have been developing two-stroke fuel injection for some time and our goal was to create competitive motorcycles with all the benefits of fuel injection while fitting into our Ready To Race mantra.

"There has been extensive testing and considerations for our research and development team to take into account during this process, so we are very motivated by this next step and world first in technology as we take a major step forward in this segment.

"We are certainly looking forward to unveiling the new 2018 KTM 250 EXC TPI and KTM 300 EXC TPI machines in May. In Europe, the bikes will arrive at the dealer floors in early summer. In the USA and Canada, the new 2018 KTM 250 XC-W TPI will be available in very limited quantities in late fall."



BACK-TO-BACK WORLD TITLES FOR HAAKER

American Colton Haaker has made it back-to-back World SuperEnduro Championship wins with a solid podium result at the final round of the series held in Albi, France.

The Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racer entered the final round of the championship with an 11-point lead over Factory KTM's Alfredo Gómez.

Gómez was able to secure his maiden round win, finishing the night on equal points with teammate Jonny Walker. However, Haaker's 2-2-3 main event results were enough to secure the final spot on the podium and, more importantly, a seven-point championship-winning margin.

Competing in his first-ever SuperEnduro championship last year, Haaker won the title with a last-lap pass for the win in the final moto of the last race of the series. Coming into the 2017 series as defending champion and

having recently also secured the AMA EnduroCross title, Haaker placed a strong second overall at round one in Poland before enjoying a perfect night at round two in Germany with three final wins.

"It's great to win the SuperEnduro title again," said Haaker. "It's been a very different championship to last year as I felt like I started this series as favourite to win.

"I came out strong at the first two rounds and managed to open up a little gap at the top of the points. I think Jonny and Alfredo worked really hard during the break after the first two rounds but tonight I felt like things were pretty even between us all.

"Defending the SuperEnduro title was definitely something different and quite possibly harder to do, but I'm just stoked to win the championship. I felt like I rode well tonight but at the same time I knew the title was on the line. I'm stoked to have got two SuperEnduro titles in a row."

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OZ-BUILT BEAST

AUSTRALIAN ACERBIS IMPORTER OFF ROAD IMPORTS TAKES US THROUGH THE PROCESS OF RELEASING AN ALL-NEW PRODUCT TO THE WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY MATT BERNARD

The Patriot Edition plastic kit for the Honda CRF450R started as a simple idea. Off Road Imports managing director Toby Andrews was sitting in a meeting at Acerbis HQ in Italy.

The idea of a Patriot Plastics kit was floated across the table but, with the in-house marketing team charging forward with the new 2017 range, the project was released to the Australian team to execute. A quick text message back home had the Australian marketing team working on renderings to expand on the idea.

Between the Australian and Italian offices, the Patriot idea blossomed and grew into a feasible and polished product through the Aussie designs and renderings. It's a streamlined conversation between Acerbis and Italy so, after emails, Skype meetings and phone conferences, it was only a matter of weeks before the plastics hit production.

Acerbis USA and Acerbis Belgium were presented the idea and also jumped at the opportunity to release it to their markets.

"We really liked the idea," said Toby. "The Italian marketing team were slammed so I volunteered our guys





to focus on and execute it, which we did. It started with our guys sketching on paper, moving to a Photoshop render stage [and] creating a logo. We even designed custom graphics to work with the colour combination.

"We have our own studio in house at Off Road Imports, so we also put our hand up to cover the photography side of the marketing. Once the plastics arrived, our friends at Hawkesbury Honda lent us a bike, local graphics business Moto Kit printed our Acerbis graphics and we spent a day building a bike with the Patriot plastics and Acerbis accessories.

"The exciting part of the whole thing is that Acerbis Italy is now rolling out a complete range of accessories to match the Patriot product. They've designed an Acerbis X-Seat in blue red, X-brake 2.0 Disc Guard, X-Grip Frame protectors, X-Ultimate handguards and also a skidplate – all of which will be available in Australia."

The idea started small, grew quickly and was eventually presented to the world by the tight-knit team from Australia, something the entire Off Road team is justifiably very proud of. Oh, and did we mention – the bike looks epic! **DAW**

BETWEEN THE AUSTRALIAN AND ITALIAN OFFICES, THE PATRIOT IDEA BLOSSOMED AND GREW INTO A FEASIBLE AND POLISHED PRODUCT

TWO-STROKE ROYALTY

STORY SHANE BOOTH
PHOTOGRAPHY SHANE BOOTH/MIKE EMERY

THIS IS THE LAST TWO-STROKE MOTOCROSS BIKE TO WIN AN AMA SUPERCROSS OR MOTOCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP: THE 2005 FACTORY MAKITA SUZUKI RM250 OF THE GOAT, RICKY CARMICHAEL. IT WOULD BE SPECIAL TO JUST HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE SOME PHOTOS OF THIS MACHINE BUT NOT ONLY DID WE DO THAT — WE WERE GIVEN THE GREEN LIGHT TO FIRE IT UP AND RIDE IT!

I've been lucky enough to ride more than my fair share of factory race bikes over the years but as far as special bikes go, this one's at the top of the list hands down. It's one thing to ride a current factory race bike, but to ride one that's literally a piece of supercross history — 12 years after it was ridden to a championship by the Greatest Of All Time, no less — well, you have to pinch yourself.

Of all the factory bikes I've ridden for magazines, I never had the opportunity

to ride a factory two-stroke and, to be honest, I thought that opportunity had passed. Hell, I would've ridden any factory two-stroke given the chance but, when that opportunity is this bike, ridden by this guy, well I can safely say I could never test another bike and I'd be a happy man.



The power from this machine is exciting. It's strong and meaty – not in a current four-stroke way, but for a two-stroke 250 it is. It's hard to imagine how good it would have been for its time and not compare it to current-day bikes. I really felt the engine had much more torque than a stock 250 would have had at the time. That conclusion was helped by the fact RC would run this bike quite rich so it had that feeling to it. He gave strict instructions to keep it well cleared out when riding it and regular free revs were not only recommended but encouraged.





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QUICK STATS: THE GOAT, RICKY CARMICHAEL

AMATEUR RACING

- 9 Loretta Lynn National Championships
- 67 Total Amateur National Championships

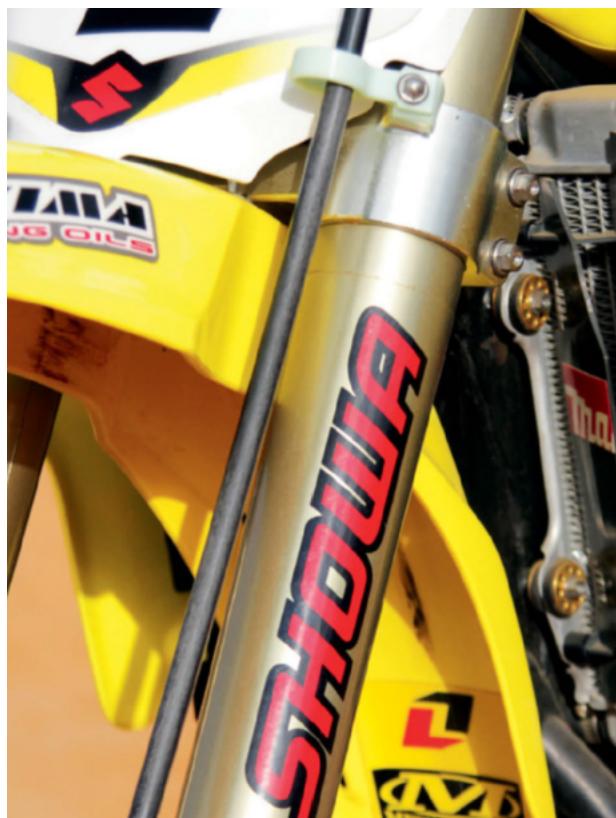
PROFESSIONAL RACING

- 1996 Rookie of the Year
- 15 Championships (record): 10 MX (record) & 5 SX championships
- 150 career wins (record): 102 MX wins (record) & 48 SX wins (2nd all time)
- 2 perfect seasons MX (record)
- Only rider to go undefeated in 125 SX series
- Never lost a MX championship 1997-2006. Never lost a title defence he contested
- 4 times MX des Nations Individual Champion (3 times team champions)
- AMA Rider of the Year 5 times (record)
- X-GAMES**
- 3 times Gold Medalist MotoX Step-up (twice) and MotoX Racing

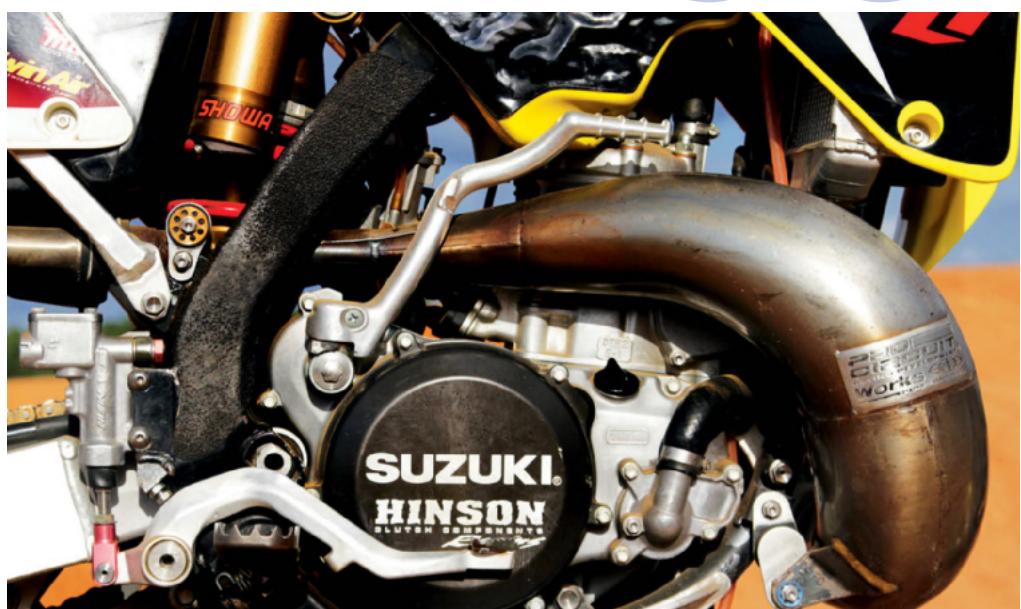
One thing that's consistent across the factory bikes I've ridden is that they continue to produce power at high rpm. This bike can scream; you can hold a gear and let the engine overrev to what seems like the moon and the power doesn't fall off a cliff like a production bike. It doesn't produce its best power there but if you have to hold a gear a little longer it doesn't punish you too severely.



ONE THING THAT'S CONSISTENT ACROSS THE FACTORY BIKES I'VE RIDDEN IS THAT THEY CONTINUE TO PRODUCE POWER AT HIGH RPM



The Factory Showa suspension always had an impressive look about it and for 12-year-old stuff nothing about it felt horrible or old. RC always had a unique setup on his bikes but you'd be a fool to call it anything but personalised to his liking.



For a 12-year-old engine I couldn't believe how tight and fresh it still felt and sounded. This thing is a beast and you couldn't wipe the smile off my face when I was riding it. The factory bike details are also so impressive: titanium bolts throughout, billet aluminium parts, alloy case guard and detailed markings like the 05 RC T3 on the lower pipe mount of the factory Pro Circuit pipe.



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This bike is the last of the factory two-strokes; hard to believe it's been 12 years since it was ridden in competition. RC rode it to seven wins in the 2005 season and wrapped up the championship with one round to go. Sitting here on the stand, it really doesn't look that dated.





RC's bike was so cool to get a ride on. It was a two-stroke beast with punchy power and so light and nimble to ride if you're comparing to today's four-strokes. Two-strokes feel light stock so you can imagine what a factory one feels like that's even lighter and has more power. It was an awesome experience and a lot of fun to spin some laps on.



FOR A
12-YEAR-OLD
ENGINE I
COULDN'T
BELIEVE HOW
TIGHT AND
FRESH IT STILL
FELT AND
SOUNDED

HOW THIS BIKE WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP

Here are the results to which Ricky Carmichael took this bike in the 2005 AMA Supercross Championship. Never missing the podium and wrapping the title up with one round to go, it was a typically impressive season from RC.

- Rd 1 Anaheim 3rd
- Rd 2 Phoenix 1st
- Rd 3 Anaheim 1st
- Rd 4 San Francisco 1st
- Rd 5 Anaheim 1st
- Rd 6 Indianapolis 1st
- Rd 7 San Diego 2nd
- Rd 8 Atlanta 1st
- Rd 9 St Louis 1st
- Rd 10 Daytona 2nd
- Rd 11 Orlando 2nd
- Rd 12 Dallas 2nd
- Rd 13 Pontiac 2nd
- Rd 14 Seattle 3rd
- Rd 15 Houston 3rd
- Rd 16 Las Vegas 2nd



These Pro Circuit R304 Shorty mufflers definitely weren't available to the public in 2005 like they are now.



The RC 4 detail on the magnesium power valve cover is so damn cool.

MOTOTZ

THE HYBRID RANGE HAS EXPANDED, ALL NEW GROUND BREAKING TYRES HAVE JUST ARRIVED

MOUNTAIN HYBRID FRONT

NOTHING COMES CLOSE TO THIS DESIGN OR PERFORMANCE

THE NEW VERSATILE ALL-ROUND TRAIL TYRE

MOUNTAIN HYBRID

MOUNTAIN HYBRID IS THE NEW KING OF THE TRAIL

WORLD'S FIRST HYBRID TRAILS/ENDURO TYRE

ALL
NEW



EXTREME HYBRID

AGGRESSIVE TREAD FOR EXTREME CONDITIONS

SINGLE FOREST TRACK & MOUNTAIN SLAYER



ARENA HYBRID

PURPOSE BUILT FOR ENDURO CROSS, EXTREME ENDURO

THE ABSOLUTE HOLY GRAIL OF TRACTION





IT'S ONE THING TO RIDE A CURRENT
FACTORY RACE BIKE, BUT TO RIDE
ONE THAT'S LITERALLY A PIECE OF
SUPERCROSS HISTORY — 12 YEARS AFTER
IT WAS RIDDEN TO A CHAMPIONSHIP BY
THE GREATEST OF ALL TIME, NO LESS —
WELL, YOU HAVE TO PINCH YOURSELF

The sound being produced at this point is something else.





A very cool billet quick-adjust clutch lever. Though these were around for a bit they still weren't standard equipment across all bikes as they are today.



Although RC's setup is not as extreme as in his Honda days, his RM250 still has the trademark cut-down seat and lowered look to it, which comes from a cut-down subframe and shortened rear shock.



Cool details like the custom Pro Taper bar pad are what make factory bikes like this so sweet. It also reminds you whose bike you're riding!



A carbon disc guard with an extremely cool RC trademarked number 4 detail. This is a very nicely made carbon part from a time when carbon wasn't as affordable or easily obtainable as it is now.

FACTORY DRIVEN



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WHEN STADIUM
MOTOCROSS COLLIDES
WITH STADIUM ENDURO,
THINGS GET WILD

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY AARYN MINERDS

In 2016, David Ellis brought Enduro-X to the masses with the first-ever dirtbike event held alongside the opening round of the V8 Supercar Championship. It showcased off-road racing to more than 200,000 spectators who walked through the gates for the New Holland Enduro-X presented by Monster Energy.

Never one to rest on his laurels, Ellis had even bigger plans for 2017, deciding to combine all the action of a supercross track with the technical nature of an Enduro-X course to bring to life one of the most unique races ever seen on Australian soil: the first-ever SuperEnduro-X.

As if that wasn't exciting enough in itself, Ellis was able to entice leading US endurocross riders Cody Webb and Kyle Redmond, along with former American supercross, motocross and Enduro-X legend Mike Brown to the event. There they would go head to head against the likes of Aussies Tye Simmonds, Peter Boyle, Todd Smith and the surprise packet of the event, former MX and SX frontrunner Cheyne Boyd.

Add to the mix 13-time World Trials champion, former World Enduro champion and Dakar outright frontrunner with a top-10 overall finish to her name, Lila Sanz; Australian freestyle gun Robbie Marshall, who was jumping straight over from his Showtime FMX show onto the start line for the SuperEnduro-X; and local state racers in the form of Shane Metcalfe, Ivan Long and Riley Graham among others. The thousands of fans who flocked from the supercar racing over to the huge SuperEnduro-X track for each and every event were in for some first-class racing action and one well-put-together show.

In another bonus for race fans, Toby Price – who played a big part in planning the SuperEnduro-X event though was unable to race due to a recent injury – was on hand every time racing action got underway, meeting and greeting with fans and spending time capturing the action across his social media networks. Price also spent time behind the wheel of his Super Truck, which he again raced at this year's Clipsal 500.

RIDER VS TRACK

The track itself was a true test of the riders' skills as each launched from a giant drop-off out of the gates and straight into a huge tyre wall. This led into two bike- and body-jarring Enduro-X lanes that included loose rock and log crossings, with a few cement pipe jumps thrown in for good measure.

A 180-degree sandpit turn greeted riders at the end of the first enduro section, leading them into the first supercross rhythm lane followed by a 65-foot SX double, around a corner into the next Enduro-X section, followed by another SX rhythm lane. Finally came a mixed lane that incorporated a log-to-cement pipe section, which the top riders were clearing in one jump, then straight into a dragon's back-to-double combination.

It wasn't a track for the fainthearted and certainly let riders show off their particular skill set, really highlighting where their strengths and weaknesses lay depending on their riding background.

As with last year's event, racing was held across all four days of the Clipsal 500, with smaller daytime races giving fans a glimpse of what was to come in Friday's and Saturday afternoon's big main events.

WEBB STARTS HOT

On Friday evening it was American Cody Webb who took home the prize money in the one-lap time-trial qualification session, though local rider Shane Metcalfe, aboard his YZ250 two-stroke, proved to be a fan favourite as one of the first riders to hit each SX rhythm section. Meanwhile, fellow local rider Ivan Long also had the crowd on its feet with wide-open antics that had him flying sideways over both SX and Enduro-X obstacles.

Tye Simmonds stole the show during Friday evening's Man vs Man race, taking down his American counterparts on his way to picking up a handy little winner's cheque.

When the gates dropped on the two back-to-back six-lap main event races, it was American Red Bull KTM racer Cody Webb whose experience shone through, taking line honours in both races to secure the win.

Mike Brown secured second position on countback over Kyle Redmond as the Americans stole the show.

The unluckiest rider of the day was Yamaha's Cheyne Boyd who, despite rocking up to the event with his supercross suspension, was on track for third position in the second main and a top-three overall until a last-lap crash put him out of contention.

WICKED WEEKEND

Saturday evening's show was again packed to the rafters as Supercar fans came looking for some two-wheeled entertainment once the four-wheeled action had finished and before the night's big concert got underway.

With a host of goodies from Monster Energy, Michelin, Ogio, Milwaukee Tools and more launched into the crowd, the racing action once again got going. In a repeat of Friday evening's event, Webb once again led the way in qualifying before Simmonds pulled in his second straight Man vs Man win.

In the main events, Webb proved too strong for the second day in a row, taking home another win despite a tough battle from 45-year-old Mike Brown, while Boyd made amends for his late race crash the day before to hold down a pair of third-place finishes and land on the final step of the podium.

MIKE BROWN: Former American SX front-runner, American Motocross Champion, World Motocross Championship contender, American Enduro-X champion, US ISDE rider – there isn't much this 45-year-old legend hasn't done on two wheels

The track layout of alternating lanes of Enduro-X and supercross is something I enjoyed the best. I was able to rest a little bit in the jump sections and the technical sections – that's where all the work happened.

Cody Webb is good at this stuff. He was so good in the logs out there whereas I think my bike was a little too stiff for those things. He's so tall, he could just get over the back of the bike and pin it over those things.

I wish all the races were like this over in America. The races over there are more trials races now than a



hybrid enduro track with logs and obstacles; it's more technical. I prefer this much more.

This has been a great event; I hated missing it last year due to injury so it's good to finally get down here for it. It's one of the best events I've ever been to, especially for spectators. I've never been to an event like this where you have the top level of car racing along with all types of other car and truck races, Enduro-X, freestyle, concerts each night.

I've been out and watched all the racing and am going to go watch the final V8 races now. I love it. I raced cars for two years and if I could do it I'd rather be in those things at this age.

I love racing, though, no matter what it is; and, shoot, I'm just happy to be down here in Australia racing motorcycles at the age of 45! If I can ever come back and race again it would be great. If not, just to be able to come back and see this event again would be something special.

CODY WEBB: American Enduro-X star, 2016 Erzberg runner-up and recently graduated mechanical engineer

The track layout was actually quite simpler than I'm used to back home and I didn't have the suspension set up exactly how I would've liked for it but we made the best of it.

I got more and more comfortable all weekend, though at the same time you could see that all the moto guys were getting more comfortable on the Enduro-X lanes over the track.





IT'S ONE OF THE BEST EVENTS I'VE EVER
BEEN TO, ESPECIALLY FOR SPECTATORS



As an event as a whole it's been the most fun and greatest event I've ever done. There's so much racing, so much going on and the opportunity to make some decent money out on the track and we're here in Australia with this beautiful weather.

The track layout was super fun, though the start was a little dangerous with too much going on too fast straight out of the gate. It would've been nice to have a more traditional first-turn corner and reduce some of the chaos.

I was getting more and more comfortable with the supercross rhythm sections over the four days. The first practice session I felt like a fish out of water; it was my first time ever hitting a rhythm section [and] it took a little bit of time. Kyle [Redmond] and I were getting more comfortable while a guy like Brownie was loving that stuff right off the bat.

By the final moto of the weekend I was tripling into that back corner and just hammering that corner into the big double as hard as I could. I was in a groove today and it's always good when you're out there smiling and having fun.

We've been out to watch the car racing including watching Toby in the Super Trucks. That guy has phenomenal talent in anything he does. That racing is so exciting and has been the best battle we've seen out on the track all weekend. I'm about to get out of my gear now and go watch the Super Trucks; it's so exciting and a whole new type of racing for me and it's so cool to see a moto guy out there mixing it up. Maybe something to do in the future – as they say, with age comes a cage – but car racing involves a little bit more money, so I have to get things figured out on that one!

I know the McAlpine brothers; I filmed a Red Bull video with Jason last year and he asked if I was heading down

SATURDAY EVENING'S SHOW WAS AGAIN PACKED TO THE RAFTERS AS SUPERCAR FANS CAME LOOKING FOR SOME TWO-WHEELED ENTERTAINMENT

for it and I was like, "Noooo, I haven't been invited." After that I forgot all about it until Kyle mentioned it about two weeks ago, so we called Dave and a couple of days later we were on a plane down here for it.

I got my mechanical engineering degree last May, took my final exam and then flew out to Erzberg. My life has just been on a big bike racing vacation of late.

LILA SANZ: 13-times World Trials Champion, World Enduro Champion and a top-10 overall Dakar finisher

It's my second time in Australia; I was here once before to do a trials school for women which was organised by the FIM. We had a lot of girls down in Sydney for the school and I then spent some time in Queensland with Kristy McKinnon.

The track out here was really hard for me as I'm not used to the motocross/supercross sections of the track; I've never raced any motocross before. It was hard but a good experience and I've learned a lot over the four days and improved since the day I got here. I've also finished the weekend safe, which is important as I have the first round of the Spanish Enduro championships next weekend.

It's been nice to be able to ride the supercross sections of track; it's always fun to have a new experience and learn new things. It's important to learn how to jump but it's something I've never had time

to practise as there isn't much time for anything else between my Rallye and enduro racing.

This event is amazing. Toby Price told me about this event last year but I was still surprised to see how big the event is and all the people that are here.

On Saturday I went over to see the Supercars and I really enjoyed that and also the race that Toby did in the trucks. It's amazing how much talent he has in a car; I think he has a big future in car racing.

The whole event was great, from the SuperEnduro-X to all the car racing. It was really nice to see.

CHEYNE BOYD: The former Australian supercross and motocross star had never raced any enduro or off-road event before the Clipsal 500 SuperEnduro-X

It was definitely different. It didn't catch me off guard and I knew I'd be a bit of a novice at it, but as the weekend went on I learned more and more each time I went out. My bike setup was definitely off for the enduro sections of the track but was awesome through the supercross sections, so I used my strengths to make up time there and give myself a bit of a break.

The rest of the track was all about consistency and a little bit of luck. You're riding into rocks that move, logs that move, so there's a little bit of luck at times, but at the same time making sure you look ahead and commit to each section.

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Overall it was a good weekend. It seemed like I had all my bad luck in those smaller day races and all the good luck in the finals at night. It was good to get up on the podium and be the number-one Aussie a fair few times over the weekend. I'm just disappointed it ended with a crash and injury after a rider took me out.

I've never done any enduro racing in my life; it's been all MX and SX. Back in the early 2000s, Chad Reed, Mitch Hoad and I would go trail riding in Cessnock but that's the only sort of trail riding I've ever done before this event. I've never practised Enduro-X one bit. All this jumping over rocks and logs is a new thing.

I came here with my supercross suspension and it was way too hard in the technical enduro sections. My natural SX setup is on the softer side so I thought I could get away with it, but at the end of the day it was too hard.

My only preparation for this event was I was told to get mousse tubes, so we did that and it proved a good thing in eliminating the flat tyres out there.

I have to say this event has been brutal on not only the body but also the bikes. The amount of parts and the amount of gear I've been through, especially ending with a crash, has been gnarly. I've been through more parts and gear in the past four days than I have in the past two to three years. I've ruined two helmets, both brake disks, sprockets, bars, every lever. It's gnarly. If I come back I'll need a bigger parts budget and someone else's bike!

I think with some time to practise and set up a bike I could make it a lot more consistent and smooth and a better ride for me. But in saying that, I still had a ball – I achieved a lot and came away with some great results.

It's definitely a gnarly sport. Hats off to Brownie, Webb and the others to just how good they are; it's probably the gnarliest conditions and form of racing I've had to go into.

TYE SIMMONDS: Former Australian MX and SX frontrunner, AORC championship contender and desert racing gun

It was a great event; I had an absolute ball. I wanted to come out last year but we didn't get the chance to with the first round of the AORC being so close.

We got down here this year and I hadn't done a whole lot of riding and I'm not real fit at the moment, but I had an absolute ball. The rocks and the logs and all that technical stuff made it hard but the supercross stuff was so fun and gave me a bit of a breather around the track.

The racing was so much fun and the guys put on such a great show. The atmosphere around the track was great; the crowd looked like they were having a ball and you could definitely hear them yelling and screaming. The Man vs Man races made for some close racing and spectating for them as well.

From my point of view I thought it was a pearly of an event. All the crowd from the V8s and car racing would come over when we were racing and were backing it and they enjoyed it. If Dave can keep this thing going it will be awesome; they did a bloody unreal job.

It felt good to get some wins in the Man vs Man races and for one lap I know I'm pretty good but, like I said, I'm a little unfit – I haven't raced since the 4 Day last year. But we'll come back next year if it's on again and spend some time on the bike now that I know what I'm in for.

It was good the way they changed up the format and had different types of racing. The Americans were too good in the longer races. By the three-lap mark they were gone, while the one-lap qualifying and the Man vs Man races were a lot closer and provided some great spectating.

I have a big year ahead now. I have the wedding coming up and now it's time to get back into training and get fit and ready for the big two desert races later this year, Finke and Hattah.



DAVE ELLIS: The brains behind the Clipsal 500 SuperEnduro-X

After we finished the event last year, I sat around with Matty McAlpine, Toby Price and the other boys involved on putting on the show and talked about what we wanted to do for 2017.

We talked about doing the EnduroX as we did last year but came up with the idea of adding in some supercross. When we talked to the organisers at Clipsal and told them what we wanted to do they were all for it.

The budget increased probably another third to get the supercross element added into the track design but we needed to keep elevating ourselves to the next level. People are paying premium prices for tickets to the Clipsal event so they want bang for their buck with everything that's happening at the venue.

The South Australian government were very supportive of the idea, so that's the path we went with and by doing so we enticed some really big riders to come out. Mike Brown contacted me to say he wanted to come back after missing the event last year due to injury and, as soon as I got off the phone to him, both Kyle Redmond and Cody Webb called me wanting to come over for it.

It was a big stretch for both Husqvarna and KTM Australia to throw in even more support at the last minute but Jeff Leisk and both team managers were super supportive of the event and made it happen.

To have Lila Sanz come over was amazing and the crowd really took to her and she had some great support.

The event was a great success again. This type of hybrid EnduroX/supercross racing has a lot of potential.

The combination of the technical enduro-style obstacles and the high-flying supercross jumps makes for some spectacular action.

The racing on the track was great and to see the likes of Cheyne Boyd go head to head with the big-name American riders certainly got the crowd going.

ROBBIE MARSHALL: Showtime FMX team manager and rider, first-time Enduro-X Racer

I'd never really done any type of enduro racing before. Growing up on a farm I'd wheelied over a few logs before and ridden around in the bush a little bit, but that track was a real eye-opener.

The event itself was a very professionally run event and certainly one of the better events we've had in Australia. The track was a little bit hard on the bikes and it would've been good to spend some time just focused on the racing and have a bike setup to suit instead of heading out there on my spare freestyle bike.

It was a busy weekend going backwards and forwards between the freestyle shows with the Showtime FMX team and then jumping straight into the SuperEnduro-X racing, especially with the heat over the four days. The event itself has grown a lot and has come a long way since we first started doing the freestyle show.

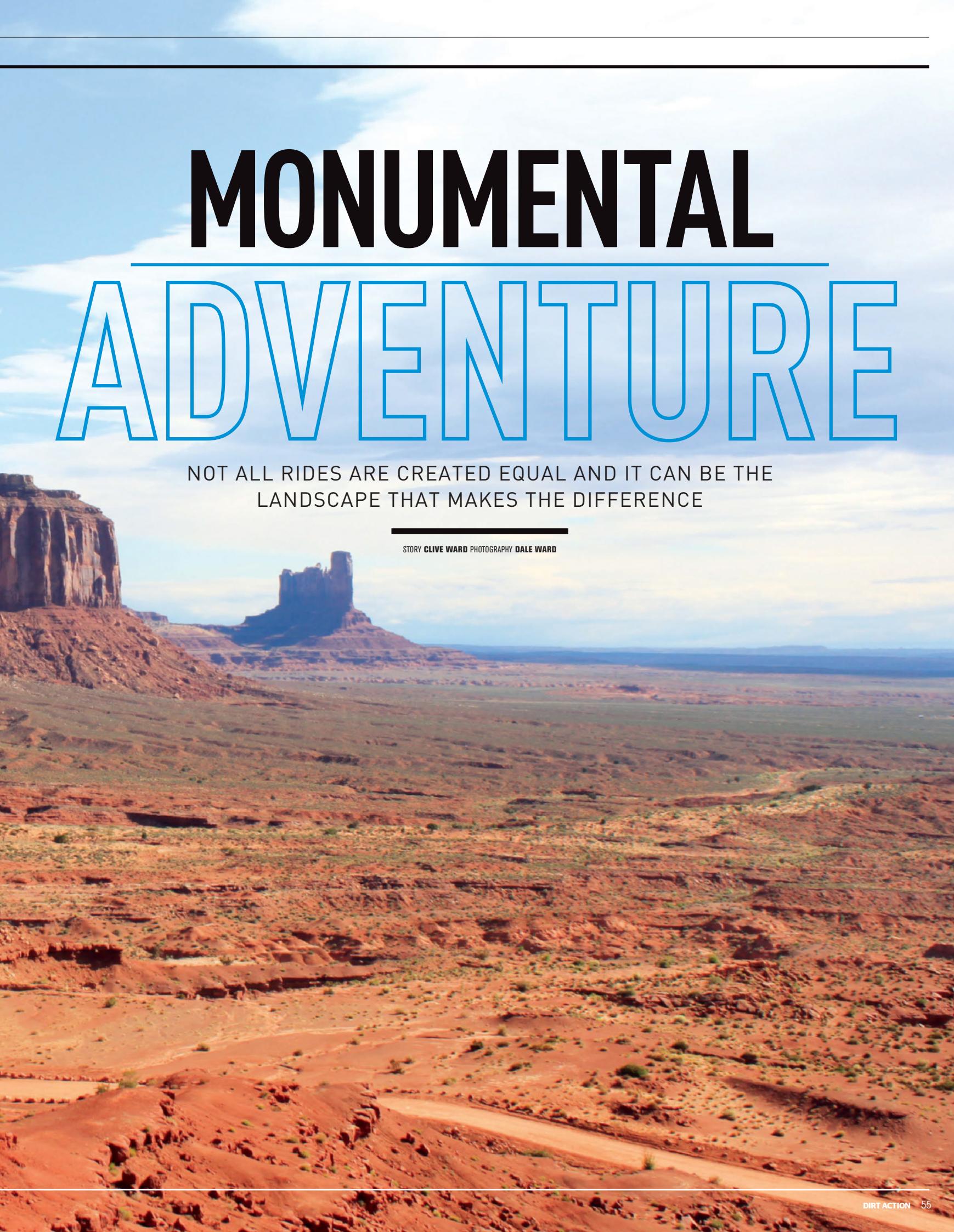
There's always a really big crowd at Clipsal so it's a no-brainer to have this type of event at a big Supercar race. We've always had a big crowd come over to watch the freestyle shows and the SuperEnduro-X just gives more for people to head over and watch all the action. 



THE TRACK ITSELF WAS A TRUE TEST OF EACH RIDER'S SKILL



MONUMENTAL ADVENTURE

A wide-angle photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there are red, layered rock formations and a dirt road. In the middle ground, a large, prominent rock formation rises from the horizon. The background shows a vast, flat desert plain stretching to a distant horizon under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

NOT ALL RIDES ARE CREATED EQUAL AND IT CAN BE THE
LANDSCAPE THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

STORY CLIVE WARD PHOTOGRAPHY DALE WARD



STEP ONE IS AN EASY DAY'S RIDE OF 635KM NORTHEAST OUT OF VEGAS ON HIGHWAY 15

It's not often I find myself in Las Vegas. This time it's the day after the Supercross final. Clubby and all our American friends are heading back to LA after our dual-sport desert ride from LA to Las Vegas and the missus and I have a few days to kill.

EagleRider Motorcycle Rentals (eaglerider.com) solves our problem. Three days of adventure coming up: we're headed for the Arizona-Utah border to Monument Valley.

Step one is an easy day's ride of 635km northeast out of Vegas on Highway 15. The ride takes nearly all day with fuel and refreshment breaks and several photo opportunities and stops at Kanab, Big Water Visitor Center, Lake Powell and Kayenta, during which we crisscross between Nevada, Arizona and Utah.

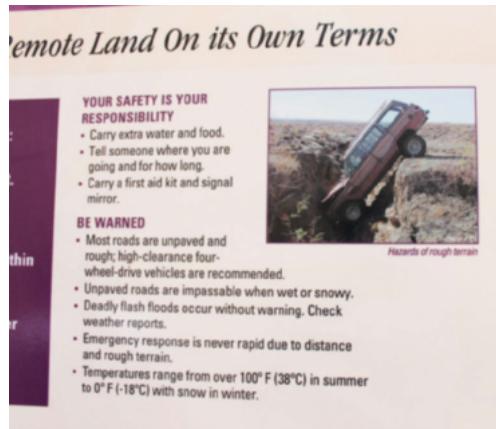
We finally arrive at our digs for the night: Goulding's Resort, inside the Monument Valley Native Indian Reserve. Hey, it was the only place John Wayne would stay when filming in the area and it was perfect for us, too. The Indian reserve is a dry area so if you plan on having a beer while watching the sunset you better make it a ginger – the whole area is alcohol free; you can't bring it in or buy it there.

If you're a fan of old westerns or have seen the recent *Lone Ranger* movie, you'll recognise a lot of scenery around the Monument Valley area, especially on the tourist loop from the main tourist centre. Hundreds of westerns were shot here and they still film around here on a regular basis. It's part of the national park and requires a \$10-per-vehicle access pass.

The road in is only a short drive from our overnight accommodation. Goulding's is a large resort with many accommodation options, from hotel rooms to the fabulous stand-alone feature cabins we stayed in. It also has a classic restaurant where we're able to watch the sun set across the valley and try some old western fare. The crumbed steak is excellent.

DAY TWO

We start out early as we want to see as much as we can in the area before heading south to Flagstaff and then following parts of the old Route 66 to our overnight stop at Kingman.



Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park Visitor Center is the starting point of the self-drive tour: follow the road in a one-way direction and it takes you through the valley. You get a close and uninterrupted view of some of the most magnificent rock formations, known as mesas (Spanish for tables) and buttes. It's truly stunning and I rate it up there with our Uluru.

In hindsight, we should've made sure we had two nights and a full day here. I think it would've been worth



staying around all day and watching the different colours and shadows move through the valley with the sun and I expect sunset would be spectacular. We've vowed to come back some day and do a sunset experience.

By 11.30am our time is up and, after a fuel and food charge in Kayenta, it's dead south up and up into high country towards Flagstaff, a city on the Colorado Plateau at 2100 metres. Flagstaff was founded for lumber and is surrounded by mountain pine plantations.



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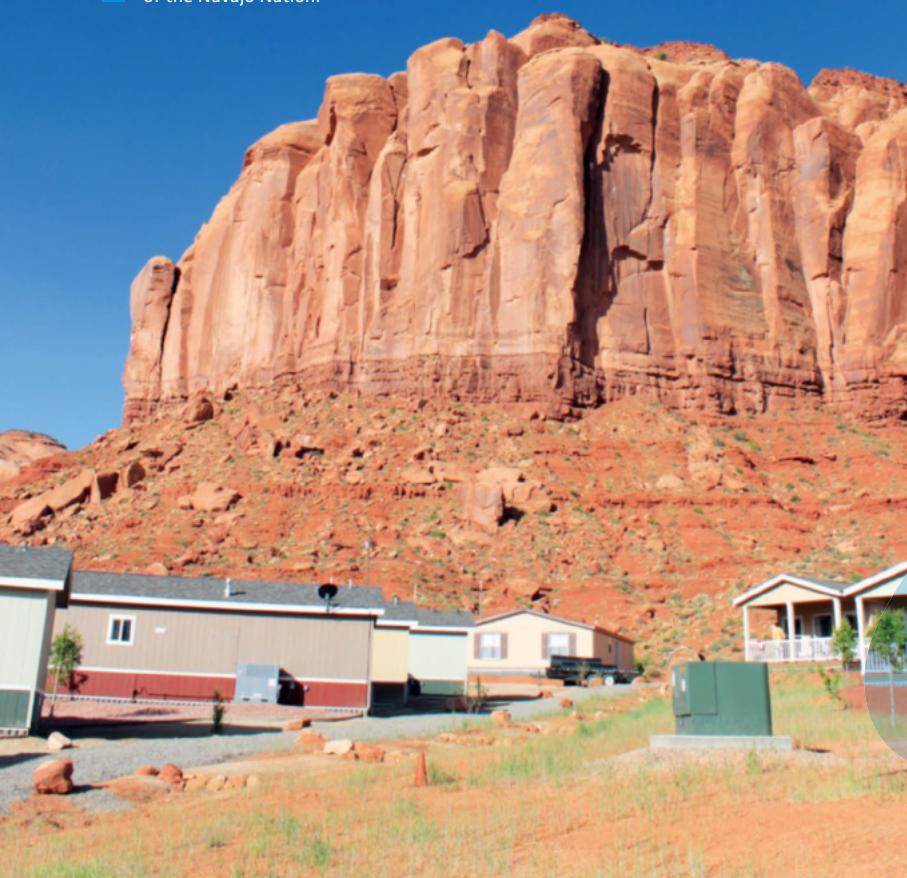
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Overseas model shown with optional accessories. *As at 6/3/2017

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YOU GET A CLOSE AND UNINTERRUPTED VIEW OF SOME OF THE MOST MAGNIFICENT ROCK FORMATIONS, KNOWN AS MESAS AND BUTTES. IT'S TRULY STUNNING AND I RATE IT UP THERE WITH OUR ULURU

Latte charged and it's off on the final 200km west to Kingman. Along here you can stay on the interstate or veer off in spots to check out some of the old Route 66 towns. We take a couple of exits, one of which goes through the township of Seligman. You can see in its day how it would have been a vibrant hub; now it's just a sleepy small town.

LAST DAY

Our final day starts with the Route 66 Powerhouse museum, then another side-road adventure to the small township of Oatman, a place where donkeys freely roam the streets. It's like a classic town from a western movie, still stuck in the mid-1800s.

Then it's another back road as we make our way out to the western rim of the Grand Canyon followed by a run past Lake Mead then over the new interstate bridge network past the Hoover Dam. The old road through the Hoover Dam is still accessible and is entirely used for tourism now. We do a quick pass, grab a few photos and then head back out to Boulder City for a late lunch. Then it's time to drop the bike back at Las Vegas and catch the shuttle bus to the airport. 





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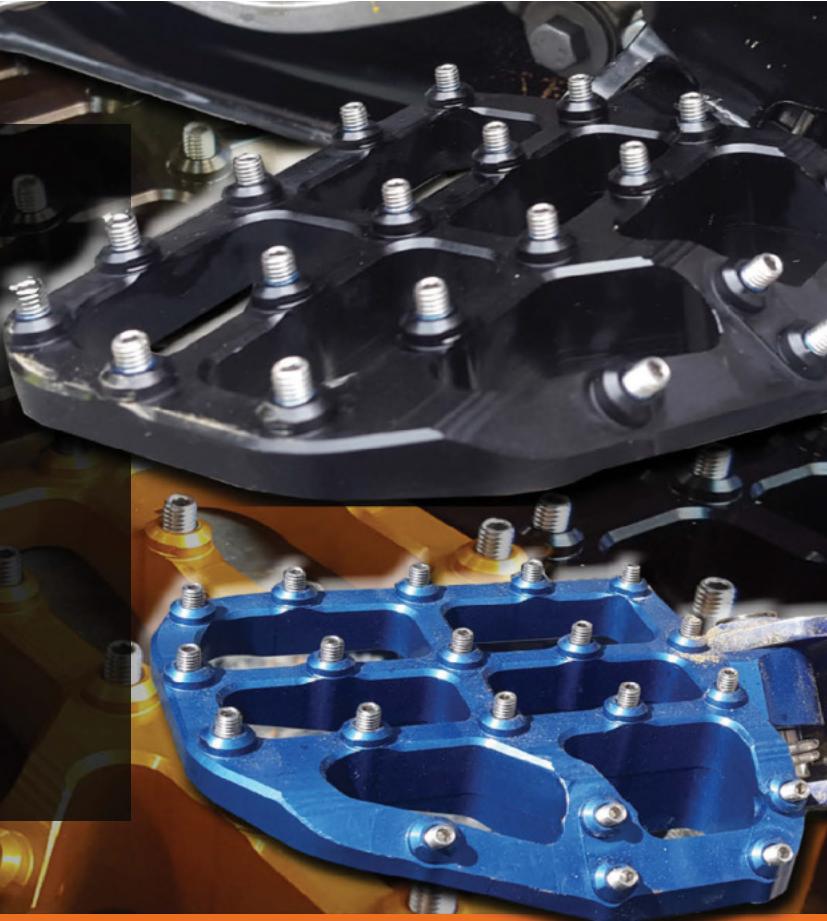
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LITTLE SCR

THE HUSKY 125 RECEIVED A MAJOR OVERHAUL IN 2016 SO NO BIG CHANGES WERE EXPECTED FOR THIS YEAR. IT DIDN'T GO UNALTERED, THOUGH — A FEW UPDATES AND THE ALL-NEW WP AER FORK JUST SWEETENED THE PACKAGE THAT LITTLE BIT MORE

WORDS SHANE BOOTH PHOTOGRAPHY MATT BERNARD





AMER



THE ADDITION OF THE WP 48MM AER FORKS HAS DONE WONDERS FOR THE HUSKY RANGE OF MOTOCROSS BIKES



The Husqvarna TC 125 and its orange cousin are the only two 125cc motocross bikes to have had any updates in recent times. Only last year did the both of them receive a complete overhaul, something relatively unheard of for two-strokes these days.

So, for 2017 the Husky still benefits from some Austrian updates, the most valuable being the addition of the all-new WP 48mm AER fork. There are several other new bits but I'll get to those later. The game changer here is the fork and with that you have yourself a 125cc two-stroke that's pretty tough to fault.

WHAT'S NEW?

As I mentioned, the WP air fork is a welcome addition. The rear brake pedal is 10mm longer, the carb is now a 38mm Mikuni unit, the top handlebar mount is now one piece and the bike gets some ODi lock-on grips. It's a relatively short list of updates for a bike that does feel improved over the previous model, again thanks mostly to the new forks.

THE SUSPENSION

The addition of the WP 48mm AER forks has done wonders for the Husky range of motocross bikes and the 125 is no exception. The forks seem to work spot on with the steel-framed Huskys and their action is plush and confidence inspiring. When you get the air pressure correct for yourself you'll find you can back off the compression a little to increase the plushness

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without sacrificing bottoming resistance too much. I found the forks to work well at 130psi with the compression at 16 clicks out.

I love the way this bike turns and handles, although more than anything it's probably due to the fact it's a 125 and it's so light and feels so nimble. 125s don't have much mass turning underneath you and you forget it until you ride one again. The ease of adjustment that comes with air forks is great, too, especially when you have only one chamber to monitor.

Be aware though that you should check the fork air pressure before every moto as they are sensitive to temperature changes. If you check it early in the morning and you have a temperature increase of 10 or so degrees, for example, you'll see quite a change. It's not hard to do; just remember to stay on it.

The rear shock matches up well and the bike feels balanced. I wound some compression into it so that it just held up a little and matched up with the increased fork air pressure better but in the long run I'd go up a spring rate. Overall, the package with the new fork works very well and wipes away the big black mark the 2016 models had with the 4CS fork.

THE ENGINE

The biggest change here is the new Mikuni carburetor and the reasoning behind the change is mostly due to the fact that Husqvarna believes it's easier to get a setting and will less likely to need rejetting if a cloud blows over. Our test bike had already been jetted with a

66

ITS STRENGTH IS IN THE MIDRANGE TO TOP END BUT IT'S NO SLOUCH OFF THE BOTTOM

spec from Husqvarna Australia. This is what was in there: 44-74 needle with the clip in the second position, a 470 main jet and a 42.5 pilot – a slightly leaner overall setting that seemed to work very well with just pump fuel.

The bike was crisp and responsive. This new-generation 125cc engine is most impressive in that the power actually has some broadness to it – for a 125, anyway. Its strength is in the midrange to top end but it's no slouch off the bottom, either. From what I've heard, if you open up the airbox slightly with some additional venting the bottom end comes to life a little more.

Though the standard gearing felt fine to me, if I were racing this bike I'd be interested to try some other settings. Maybe an additional tooth or two on the rear sprocket would have you almost eliminate the use of first and second gear other than for the tightest of turns – not a bad thing on a 125. The power you have to work with would make for some interesting testing.

EURO COMPONENTS

There's one thing you can't argue about in the current range of Husqvarnas and that's the level of componentry. The Magura hydraulic clutch gives great feel and is self-adjusting, so no need to wind out free play if you're riding the clutch a little mid moto. The Brembo brakes are second to none and have always been a highlight of the European bikes. The addition of the ODI lock-on grips is a nice touch; the compound is comfortable and soft and they are a premium product that makes changing grips an easy task – albeit once you have a #15 Torx tool in your toolbox.



2017 HUSQVARNA TC 125CC SPECS

- **Displacement:** 124.8 cm³
- **Bore:** 54mm
- **Stroke:** 54.5mm
- **Starter:** Kickstarter
- **Transmission:** 6-speed
- **Secondary gear ratio:** 13:50
- **Clutch:** Magura hydraulic
- **Frame:** Chromoly steel central-tube frame
- **Front suspension:** WP-USD, AER 48, Ø48mm
- **Rear suspension:** WP shock absorber with linkage
- **Suspension travel:** front 310mm; rear 300mm
- **Front brake:** Brembo twin-piston floating caliper, brake disc
- **Rear brake:** Brembo single-piston floating caliper, brake disc
- **Front brake disc:** 260mm
- **Rear brake disc:** 220mm
- **Steering head angle:** 63.9°
- **Wheelbase:** 1485 +/-10mm
- **Ground clearance:** 375mm
- **Seat height:** 960mm
- **Tank capacity:** 7L (approx)
- **Weight without fuel:** 87.4kg



**THERE'S ONE THING
YOU CAN'T ARGUE
ABOUT IN THE
CURRENT RANGE OF
HUSQVARNAS AND
THAT'S THE LEVEL OF
COMPONENTRY**



LIGHT & COMFORTABLE

Gone are the days of the full-on Euro bike feel – the TC 125 is a comfortable bike to sit on and everything feels like it's in a good place. The Husqvarna's seat has some serious traction to it; it's an aggressive, functional design but by far the most aggressive of all manufacturers. Not a bad thing, but if you're doing a lot of riding your backside will let you know about it for a few days after. Another great 125 trait is how light it feels. It's just a refreshing change when you ride one; you can really just place the bike where you want when you want. It really is a lot of fun.

THE WRAP

I just wish I was racing 125s again. This would have been such a fun bike to race on a supercross track – and in motocross, for that matter. I really hope other manufacturers realise the value of 125cc bikes in motocross and follow suit with Husqvarna and KTM and pour some development into this class. There's no doubt this bike, along with its orange brother, is the pick of the bunch in the 125cc class and with the new fork it's tough to fault in any major way. If I'm racing a 125 in 2017 I'd like it to be white or orange, that's for sure. **DAW**

20

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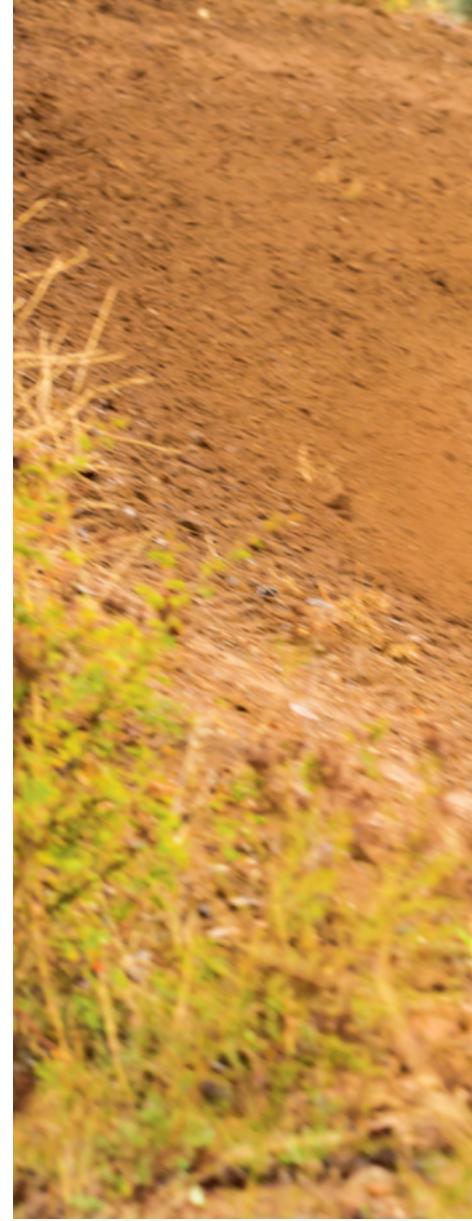
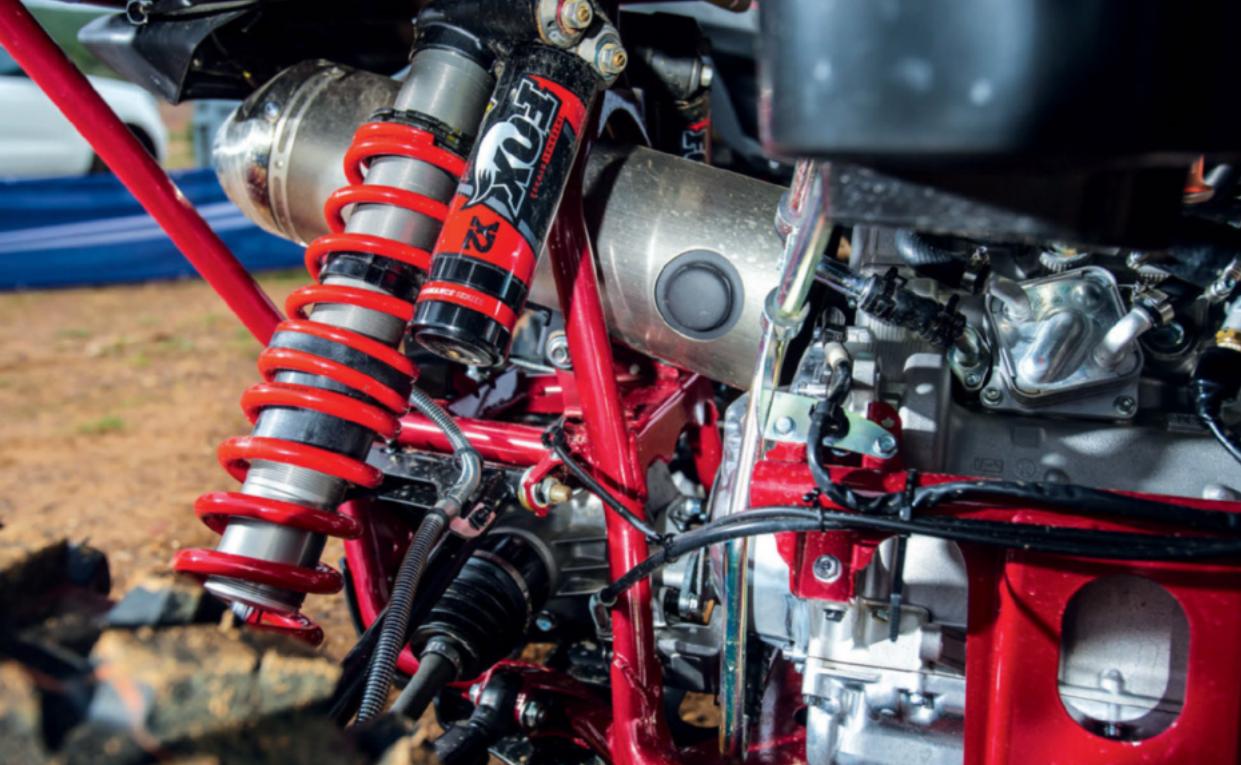




STORY DAMIEN ASHENHURST
PHOTOGRAPHY GREG SMITH/YAMAHA

BORN RACER

WE START AS SCEPTICS BUT SOON
COME AROUND TO YAMAHA'S NEW
YXZ1000R SS SE



So we get an invite to a launch, which is usually a happy occasion: a chance to catch up with industry folk, ride a bike in the dirt and maybe, just maybe, have a beer somewhere among the proceedings.

But this invitation was different – there was no bike in the picture. It was ... a quad? No, not a quad or an ATV as such. It's got four wheels as well as a steering wheel and this caused me to pause. I put my excitement on hold. I have something with four wheels and a steering wheel and it's called a Holden Rodeo. And it's a mammoth shitbox, too. Why would I want to attend this launch?

Upon a search for more information I found that Yamaha was inviting me to the launch of the new YXZ1000R SS SE and two things got my attention. One was the fact that it looks wicked, like a giant insect from Hell. And it has a 1000cc engine. A thousand ccs, folks! It's hard to pass up having a crack at anything on the dirt that's running 1000cc. And it has paddle shift.

I accepted the invite and this is what went down.

WHAT IS IT?

With no real idea what gear to pack for riding/driving the YXZ, I headed to the airport to make my way to the launch in Canberra. Should I dress like a farmer or like Antonio Cairoli? I had no idea so I went half-and-half.

Have you ever flown Rex? Anyone who has would be intimately familiar with the way they delay departure so much you end up spending more time with them than you do with a first cousin. It's a good thing those regional departure lounges are so opulent (please note the deep sarcasm).



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At the press briefing we were introduced to the special guests from America, Jason and his wife Corry Weller. Jason and Corry both race YXZs and also build them into race weapons for the healthy four-wheeler market in the States. Along with Aussies Dan McKenzie, Jake Williams and the great Stephen Gall, we were in good hands and would be shown how to pilot these things the right way – which is not into a tree or onto their roofs.

The YXZ1000R SS is an ROV (recreational offroad vehicle). It has at its heart a three-cylinder 998cc engine taken from a Yamaha snowmobile and mated to the unique paddle shift and five-speed gearbox (selectable 2WD or 4WD and diff lock) – plus auto clutch, which is really the game changer here.

While the competition uses CVT transmissions, the Yamaha is a manual but without a clutch or gear stick. This makes it more versatile and, given you can shift

THAT MORNING I HAD MY DOUBTS AS TO WHETHER THIS WAS SOMETHING WORTH DOING. IT WAS A MASSIVE TURNAROUND TO WONDERING IF MY SISTER WOULD ALLOW ME TO CUT IN A TRACK ON HER PROPERTY

at any point in the revs without taking a hand off the steering wheel and it has launch control, it's also a racer's dream.

The bouncing-up-and-down part is handled by Fox 2.5 Podium shocks that were developed specifically for the Yamaha. This part of the buggy is pretty foreign to a dirtbike guy. The flogging it cops is ridiculous but the performance is mind blowing.

DRIVE TIME

We first took a lap each as passengers with Corry on the motocross track, Jake in the bush loop and Gally on the flat track at about 70 per cent pace. Even at that speed, the Yamaha was impressive but it really was nothing and we were yet to appreciate just how hard they could go.

Once we got an opportunity to drive them the whole concept became clearer and it started to shine through just how brilliant they are. But what really stood out was just how much straight-up fun they are. Our instructors gave us some great advice and with just the smallest amount of knowledge you can work up a smile and a slight obsession with getting lines right and improving your lap times.

Our final task was to take flying laps with Jason, Corry and Gally. With the journos as passengers the pros punted around the moto and flat tracks at full noise and, believe me, this was some epic shit. Not only did it highlight how good these guys are at speed but it showed just what the YXZ can take in stock trim. It left me wanting more. Way more. I could've cut laps for hours on any of the tracks. Even though just that morning I'd had my doubts as to whether this was worth doing, it was a massive turnaround to wondering if my sister would allow me to cut in a track on her property. (She said no, by the way.)

The YXZ1000R SS SE is an impressive machine on so many levels. It allowed a muppet like me to feel I could give it some while the good guys could take the same stock unit and throw down epic lap after epic lap well beyond my capabilities. All the while, it still retains its off-the-charts fun factor. It feels safe and is chock full of cool tech. It ticks so many boxes.

The YXZ1000R starts at \$32,999 RRP (inc GST) and for that you'll get a reliable, smart, capable, fast and stupidly fun vehicle. And if you get a chance, YouTube *King of the Hammers* and have a look at what Jason Weller gets up to in these things. It's just not sensible. 

Urk spinning some laps on
Fro's Husky 450



A dynamic photograph of a dirt bike rider performing a wheelie. The rider is wearing a white helmet and a white and blue racing suit with the number '41' on the side. The bike is white with blue and yellow accents. The background shows a dirt track with green trees and a clear blue sky.

THE GOAT FLAG

THIS IS THE PICTURE DIARY OF WHAT WAS ARGUABLY THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME FOR TWO YOUNG AUSSIE RACERS, BAYLEY CLANCY AND MASON ROWE

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY SHANE BOOTH

THE RUNDOWN

This trip came together following the involvement Chris Urquhart and I had with the Ricky Carmichael University trip to Australia about 18 months ago. We offered up an opportunity to Aussie riders and had Bayley Clancy and Mason Rowe commit to the trip. It involved spending a week at the GOAT Farm, which is Ricky Carmichael's personal riding facility, followed by spectating at Daytona Supercross and then racing the Ricky Carmichael amateur supercross at the famous location. Here is the trip played out in pics.



We arrived and got to building
Bayley and Mason's bikes ready
for the week of riding



Mason Rowe (left) and
Bayley Clancy ready to roll
at the GOAT Farm

YOUR SPACE FOR MORE DIRT

MAY
29

MXGP of Spain

May 29

Carretera de los Navalmares, 1

CALENDAR

MAY

3

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Championship Lead**

BY HAYDEN GREEN

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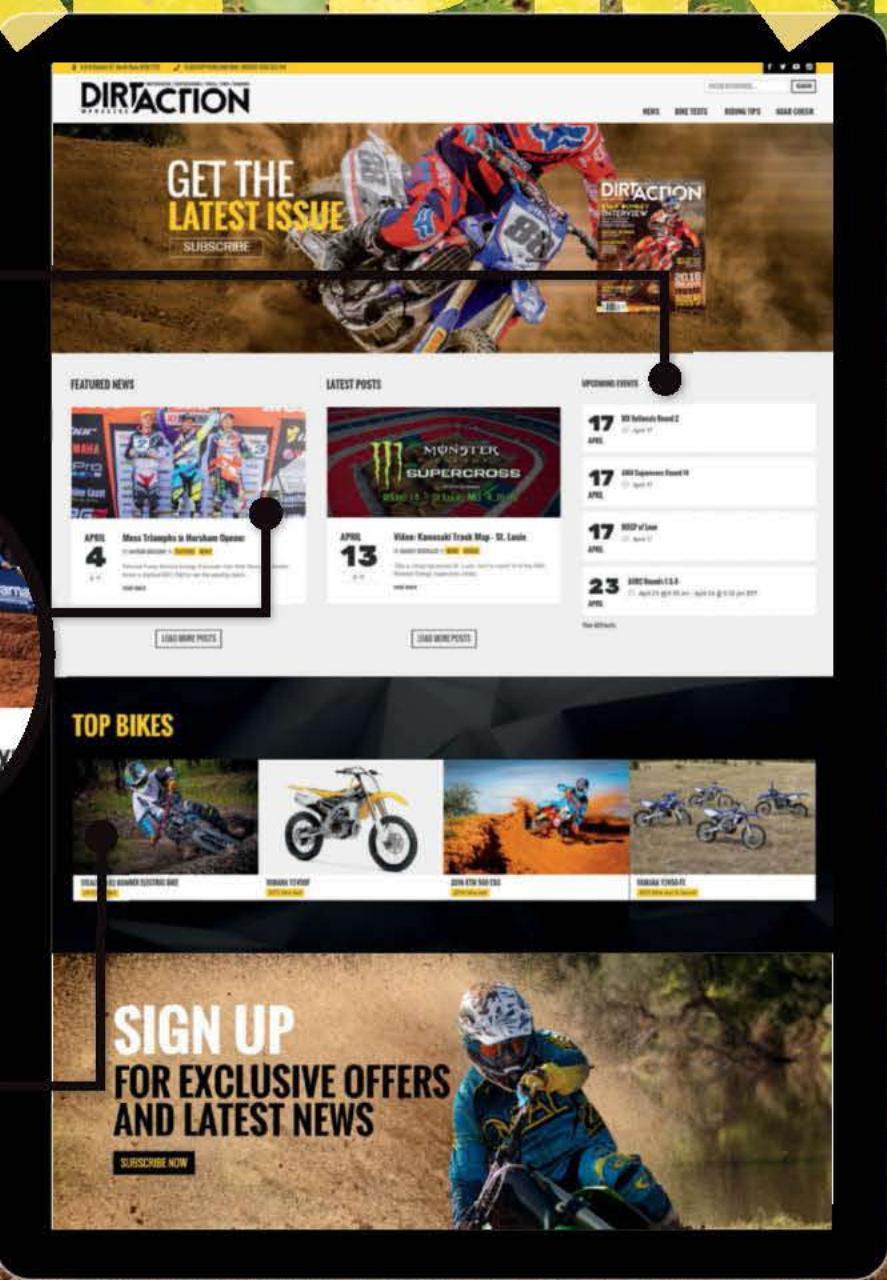
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 **OVERALL**

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**BIKE
TESTS**



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YAMAHA YZ250

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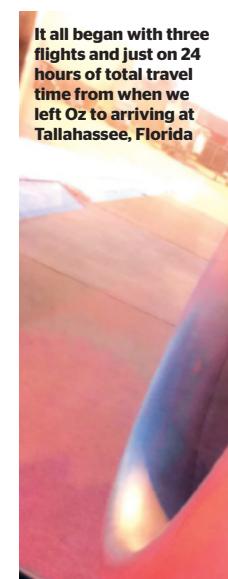
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Crazy to think I'm just chillin' with RC and Jeff Emig between sessions



The cabin RC initially lived in for several years when he first purchased the farm is now the hub for events



It all began with three flights and just on 24 hours of total travel time from when we left Oz to arriving at Tallahassee, Florida

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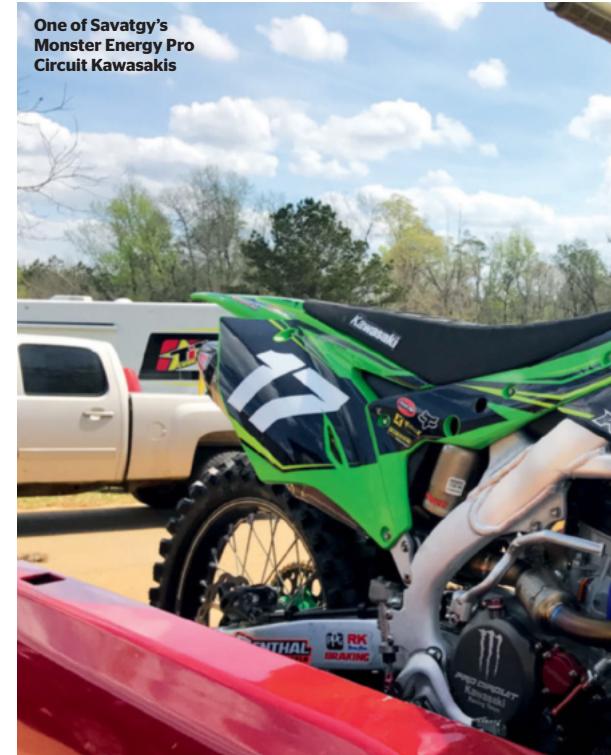
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The cabin that a certain high-profile trainer lived in during the initial time he spent with RC



One of Savatgy's
Monster Energy Pro
Circuit Kawasakis



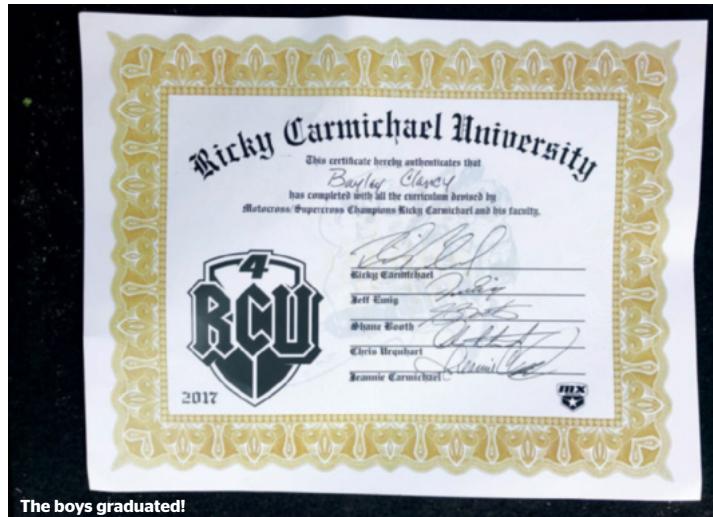
Was great to spin some laps on a familiar bike,
Fro's FC450



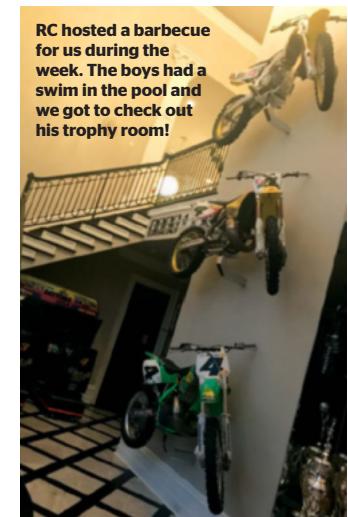
Checking out RC's late-model race car that he has in the garage



Rocky Mountain ATV MC's Ray Butts, Urk and I kicking back during a break at the Farm



The boys graduated!



RC hosted a barbecue for us during the week. The boys had a swim in the pool and we got to check out his trophy room!

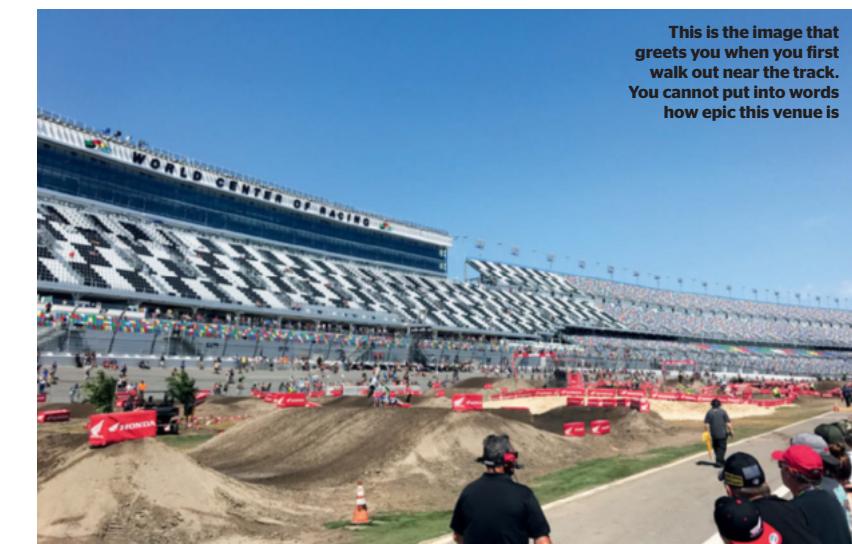
The view from the grandstand is epic.
It's only recently been
upgraded and holds over
100,000 spectators



Davi Millsaps



Debrief time with
Ryan Dungey, Roger
DeCoster and the Red
Bull KTM team



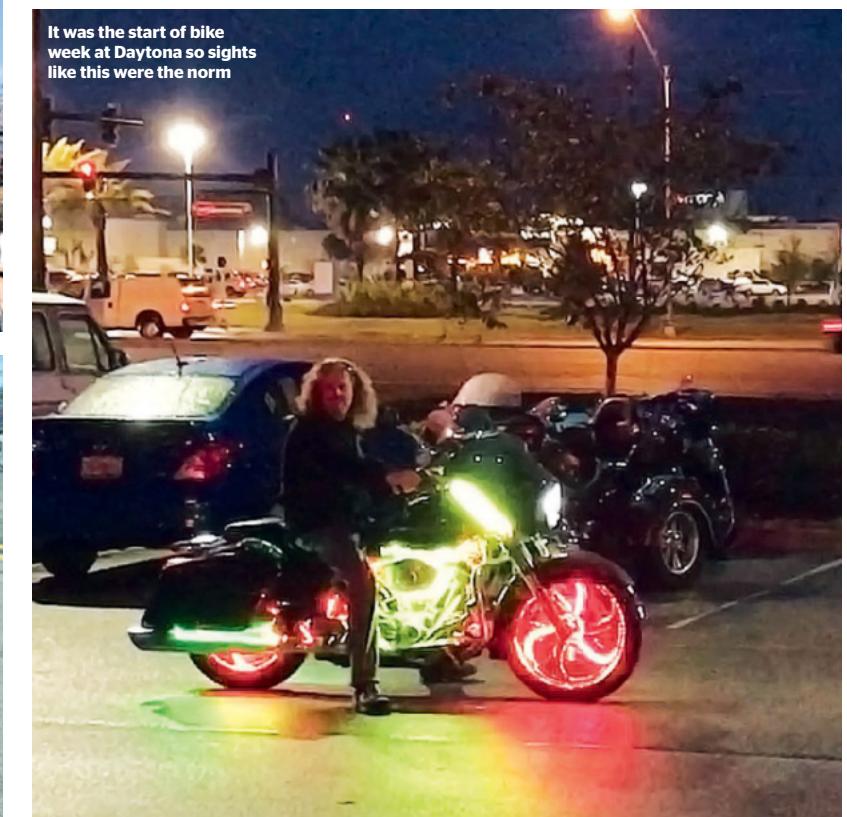
This is the image that
greets you when you first
walk out near the track.
You cannot put into words
how epic this venue is



Justin Brayton



Driving across the
world-famous track
was something I never
thought I'd do



We were treated to some exciting racing in both the 250 and 450 main events

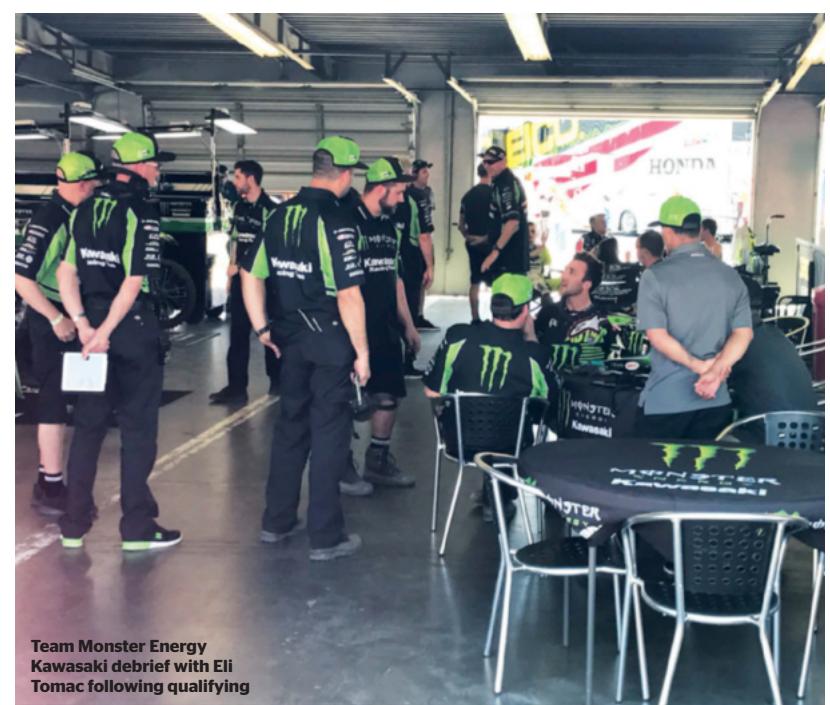


The World Center of Racing

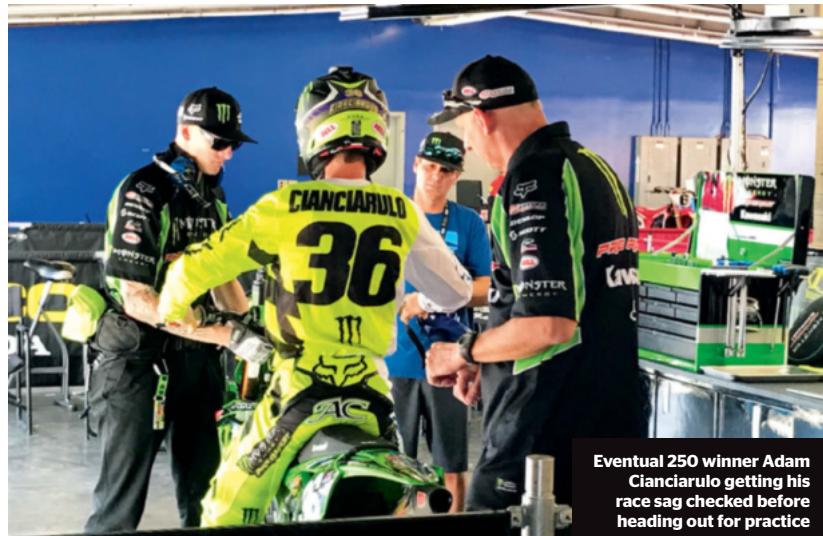




Jason Anderson



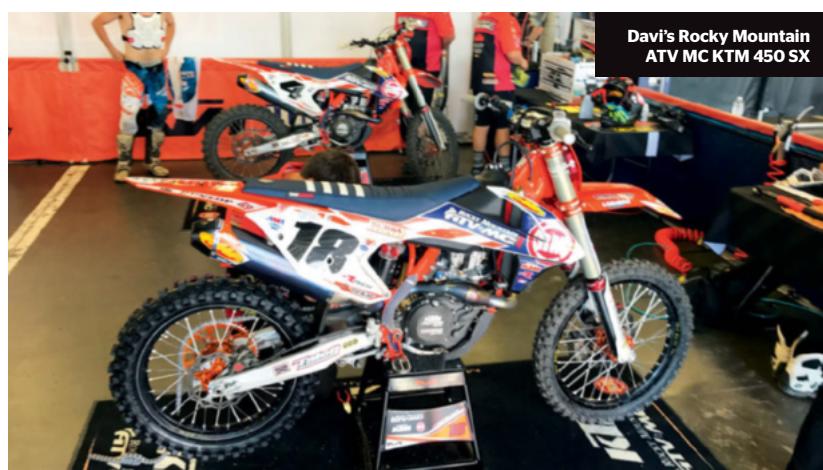
Team Monster Energy
Kawasaki debrief with Eli
Tomac following qualifying



Eventual 250 winner Adam
Cianciarulo getting his
race sag checked before
heading out for practice



Great to chat with Kirby
and check out Christian
Craig's Geico Honda



Davi's Rocky Mountain
ATV MC KTM 450 SX

Pretty cool place for
riders briefing: Daytona
Victory Lane



Mason all set to go



Good to catch up
with Burner

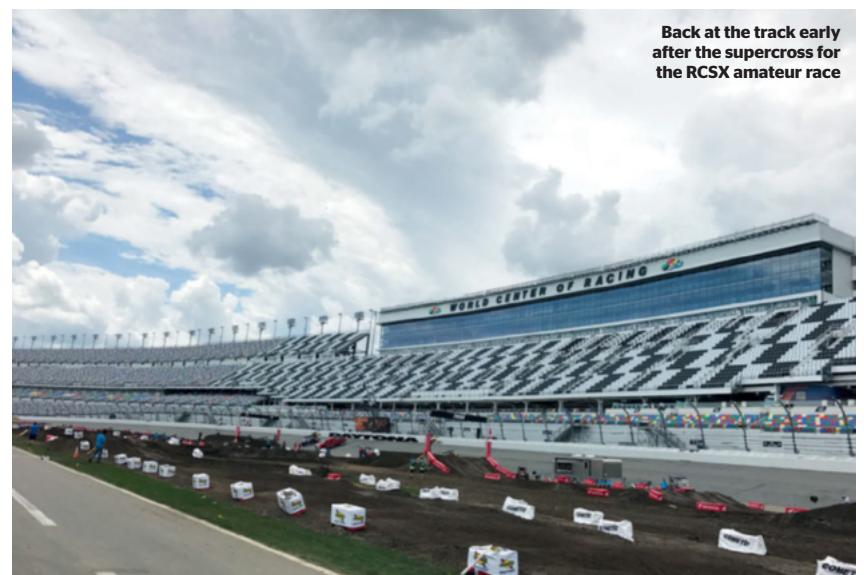




Bayley ready to race



You can literally stand on the banking and watch the supercross: so cool



Back at the track early after the supercross for the RCSX amateur race



Mason ready to head out in the mud



Thanks to a stopover in LA we had enough time to go visit the Fox Racing HQ. Cool place!



No, no, he didn't slam you, he didn't bump you, he didn't nudge you — he rubbed you. And rubbin', son, is racin'. Daytona, baby!





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ANOTHER GREAT AUSSIE INVENTION!

The WR200 was more of a race bike. It weighed 102kg and developed 27hp or 20.6kW at 7000rpm. It wasn't what you'd call a killer but had the knack in the right hands of flogging larger, faster equipment, especially in tight stuff where huge power was pointless





HOST BIKES

GEOFF UDY'S SHED IS
HOME TO THE BIKES THAT
HISTORY HAS FORGOTTEN

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY
BARRY CRASHITFIRST

Geoffrey Udy is farting about. Not seriously, like cataloguing or anything – more like ferreting through the tangled mess that not even he calls a motorcycle collection, though that's what it is.

Every now and then he sips from a pint mug of Louise's coffee and mumbles a memory. In the crazy old shed, bikes, trikes and spikes are everywhere. Old road and dirtbikes share space with a Can-Am Spyder, which Geoff sold to someone then bought back "because I like it". There are Yamaha jetskis, the remains of several boats, powered and unpowered, and out in the yard a scraggly bunch of farming utensils I can't put a name to, all lying quietly in the dust-coated apocalypse.

Geoff picks a loose front end from the general carnage, wheel still attached, and tells me how well the particular component performed when it was part of a motorcycle. I believe him because I've known Geoff for a long time and I know what a hard man he was back in the days when he and his mate Shane Litrow terrorised the Queensland dirt-racing scene. They thought nothing of driving from Brisbane to Weipa for the Croc Run or Alice Springs for the Finke Desert Race back then and much of what rests in the old shed speaks of those experiences.

They weren't scared of mucking about with the manufacturer's precious spec, either. Mr Udy was

The DT230 Lanzer, a quiet, zippy little dual-purpose two-stroke that plenty of trail riders would enjoy today



EVERYTHING WE ENJOY IN DIRTBIKES TODAY CAN BE TRACED TO THE DT-1, THE DADDY OF 'EM ALL

famous, even infamous, in some circles for hacking dirtbikes and ATVs to improve their performance. Shane "Wilbur" Litzow wasn't shy about it either. He once whacked a Yamaha DR200R engine in a YZ125 frame and swore later it was one of the best race bikes he'd ever had. And maybe it was. Wilbur finished third in class in the Finke on the "DZ200" in 1988, having designed and fitted his own premix tank, run the standard carburetor and airbox and ridden the last 10 kays with a flat tyre.

All these prized possessions of Udy's, which for all I know might include the lost DZ200, if not exactly stored are certainly lying about in a riot of odd angles waiting for the man to do a bit more sorting and a little less ferreting.

And, of course, within the collection are several worthwhile items. Two that catch my eye are both Yamahas from the good old days when oil injection was a big deal, the idea of a dirtbike worth \$10,000 was laughable, only Yamaha's Skunk Works knew what an upside-down fork was, footpegs were not much wider than clothes pegs and pillion pegs were even narrower.

The first of these bikes to tempt my camera was a DT230 Lanzer, the second a WR200. Despite the faintly Mediterranean name, the Lanzer is a member of an illustrious Japanese family and great-great grandson of the famous 246cc DT1, the Yamaha that kicked off the dirtbike craze in the US in 1968 with a retail price of \$US800.

The likes of Bultaco and Husqvarna had been fiddling about with dirtbikes for the US market for some time, but when the DT-1 dropped out of the sky everything went crazy. The bike sold its head off and everything we enjoy in dirtbikes today can be traced to the DT-1, the daddy of 'em all.





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oversize pegs



The OEM pipe and
muffler were heavy



But back to the Lanzer. The model was launched in 2009 with the DT230L, which by 2001 had become the DT230N with traction control. It was well thought of mainly because it was light (121kg), manoeuvrable and had zippy performance.

Like the DT1, the DT230 was more a dual-purpose bike than a full-on dirtbike and could make the transition from bitumen to dirt without much drama if you knew what you were doing. It sold with moderate success in Australia but had no bragging rights whatsoever compared with the mighty little DT200L and DT200RK. (These bikes were so popular they remained on the market from 1984 to 1998. They also won the Up To 200cc Class all over the place, including the Weipa Croc Run and the Queensland Enduro and the Pony Express Series. A DT200 was \$2199 in 1984 and \$5899 in 1998.

The 224cc Lanzer had a liquid-cooled two-stroke engine, CDI ignition, a carburetor and a six-speed gearbox.

It was more road oriented than the DT200L with softer suspension, electric start and auto premix, which meant you needn't add measured amounts of two-stroke oil to the fuel, merely top up the premix tank.

It was a nice little bike to ride, with easy power and a single disc brake on each wheel. It wasn't designed for a pillion, though, proof being the minuscule footpegs attached to the rear subframe. In 1999, a brand-new Lanzer would have set you back \$6999.

WHAT'S A WR?

Udy and Litzow raced WR200s for two to three years. Shane campaigned one the year of its introduction and found it very competitive, despite it having a double-skin exhaust system that weighed as much as a Kelvinator. The model started out as the unregisterable WR200RD in 1992 (\$5680) and by 1996 had become the registerable WR200RH (\$7749).



The pillion peg was
nailed to the subframe





No, Mavis, it
didn't have ABS





YOU CAN DO THAT WHEN YOU'RE STEFAN MERRIMAN

We don't know what Stefan Merriman thought of the WR but he won his class in the 1998 Australian 4 Day Enduro on one in Gympie, Queensland. It wasn't a factory WR but a second-hand unit – a trade-in. All Stefan did was change the oil and fit new tyres, a new chain and sprockets, then went out and creamed the class in a tough slog that forced many unhydrated competitors to withdraw with heat exhaustion. You can do that when you're Stefan Merriman.

Udy remembers the WR with affection. "There wasn't anything really special about it," he says. "It was just a great little package with no real weaknesses. If you put your ego in your pocket, you could round up bigger bikes with much more power because the WR200 was easy to ride and did everything with no effort."

"It was certainly better to ride in technical stuff where most riders couldn't use all the power the larger bikes had. The WR had broad, smooth power that was easy to manage and pretty good suspension as well."

It was also quiet – perhaps too quiet. Udy says he developed a riding technique for the WR that involved "holding it on and using the horn" because the rider about to be passed couldn't hear a WR coming up behind him.

Gone are the days when bikes were as cheap, as uncomplicated or as enjoyable to ride as that one. And they were all two-strokes, the lot of them. Once upon a time you could have bought five DT200s for the price of one 2017 450. Now we ride 100kg, 60hp, 450cc four-strokes that'll chew the skin off \$13,000. And so it goes. 



MOTUL MX NATIONALS

MXNATIONALS CALENDAR

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- RD 2 APPIN 23RD APRIL
- RD 3 CONONDALE 7TH MAY
- RD 4 HORSHAM 21ST MAY
- RD 5 MURRAY BRIDGE 28TH MAY

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- RD 8 PORT MACQUARIE 30TH JULY
- RD 9 TOOWOOMBA 13TH AUGUST
- RD 10 COOLUM 19-20TH AUGUST





HONDA DOMINATES AT CLIPSAL 500

WORDS & PHOTOS AARYN MINERDS





The Clipsal 500 plays host to the opening round of Australia's number-one car-racing championship, making it one of the biggest rounds of the V8 Supercars Championship. Over recent years, the addition of the TrAction Zone has offered race fans a host of off-track entertainment between the main V8 Supercar action and provides companies outside of the car-racing world with a great chance to introduce themselves to a large number of general motorsport enthusiasts.

One company with deep roots in the motorcycle world has taken full advantage of the wide cross-section of sports fans that pass through the gates every year. Honda Motorcycles Australia hosts a massive display of its current road and off-road bikes in a safe environment for youngsters to try their hand at riding, for the first time, a fleet of Honda CRF50s.

We caught up with Glyn Griffiths, Honda Australia's brand and motorsports manager from the motorcycles division, for a quick chat about the company's involvement alongside one of Australia's biggest annual sporting events.

Why did Honda Motorcycles along with Honda Power Equipment decide to get involved with the Clipsal 500?

We entered into an arrangement with Clipsal 500 about three years ago; we wanted to reach out to a new audience to showcase our product. We know that V8 fans engage with motorcycles and wanted to tap into an event where the attendance was high and there was plenty of opportunity to engage with potential customers through activations.

What are the main benefits to Honda to having a display at an event like the Clipsal 500?

The main benefit is brand awareness for Honda [with] a huge audience, engaging with new customers and the ability to reach so many people.

What types of products are on offer for spectators to look at and get to know more about at the event?

We have a range of motorcycles, power equipment and marine products on display. We also encourage our business partners that support our race teams to have displays.

Along with the display there was also an opportunity for young riders to have their first opportunity to ride a Honda CRF50. How important is it to be able to give young riders the

opportunity to ride a bike for the first time and what's involved in setting that opportunity up?

We love to see the young kids have a ride for the first time and we have Honda CRF50s on offer with qualified coaches. This allows them an opportunity that they may not get anywhere else. It's always an extremely popular engagement with the kids and parents. We don't push the sales side as it's a genuine belief that we need to encourage the young ones to gain an interest in motorcycling and to show how it can be done in a fun and safe environment.

Outside of the main Honda display and junior ride area, Honda was well represented with the Showtime FMX freestyle display and also supported the SuperEnduro-X Event along with a number of riders. How rewarding is it as the brand manager to see the Honda brand displayed in such a variety of ways in front of a potential crowd of around 250,000 people over four days?

It's very rewarding to see our product being used in so many ways and to bring so much enjoyment to so many people. The event is really well run and allows for so much activity to be going on that we have the opportunity to entertain and engage with so many people to showcase our product.

Has the addition of the SuperEnduro-X running next to the Honda display been a positive one in terms of junior riders having the chance to ride for the first time, or people in general being able to see and touch your products then walk next door and see a selection of products in action? Not only that, but also for the kids the opportunity to see what's possible on two wheels?

It's very positive to have the SuperEnduro-X, Showtime FMX and our area all close together. From an entertainment point of view, it keeps people in our area to watch all the action and then from a branding point of view, it shows the strength of our products being used for many different activities.

Finally, when the action has quietened down we have a static display area for people to enjoy, so it works really well to have all of these activities located closely together. **END**

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MOTO MANUAL

STUFF YOU NEED
TO KNOW
AND SOME STUFF
YOU DON'T

5 REASONS WE LOVE

RICKY CARMICHAEL

01

RC won his first outdoor title in 1997. He retired 10 years later having won every outdoor season he competed in from start to finish.

02

Amid some doubt from sceptics who said he crashed too much and wasn't fit, he announced himself as a true champion by beating Jeremy McGrath for the 2001 Supercross title. He took 13 from 15 wins that year and would go on to take five SX titles against some of the toughest competition ever.

04

In his final part-time year in 2007 he was still the fastest rider on the track. He won six overalls from the six races he contested and finished his career with an insane 150 wins. He also won the last race he ever entered, the Motocross des Nations in Budds Creek.

05

The time in 2005 when James Stewart landed on RC at Unadilla was one of the most memorable moments in one of the greatest races of all time – and it highlighted just how tough RC was.

03

Not only did RC win 24 motos in a row in 2002 – his first year on Honda – but he did the same in his final year on a Honda in 2004. This was also his first year on a four-stroke.



MOTOCROSS TIP





SLOW WHEELIES

THE SLOW WHEELIE IS NOT ONLY
GOOD FUN BUT A GREAT SKILL
EXERCISE, TOO

STORY SHANE BOOTH
PHOTOGRAPHY MATT BERNARD

BODY POSITION
Where you place yourself on the bike is important and will allow you to reach the controls you need to pull off a successful wheelie. You'll need to sit all the way to the rear of the seat for a couple of crucial reasons. The first is to help take weight from the front and add it to the rear of the bike – this increases traction and makes the front wheel a little easier to get off the ground. The second, and more important, is that in this position you'll notice it allows you to keep your foot on the footpeg and pivot it to use the rear brake pedal; the rear brake pedal is what stops you from flipping your bike. So, no more wheelies sitting up on the tank. Once you have the body position sorted, it's time to work through the three stages.

STAGE 2

Once you know how much throttle and clutch is required to get the front wheel up, it's time to train yourself to use the rear brake. This is by far the most important stage of learning the slow wheelie. The natural reaction of most riders to the front wheel coming up too high is to drop their feet off and run behind the bike. You need to reprogram yourself to go to the rear brake instead and trust it will do the job of bringing the front wheel back to the ground. So, this is all about popping the front wheel off the ground then pulling the clutch in and hitting the rear brake. Get a feel for it and, as you do, start bringing the front wheel up higher before you pull the clutch in and stab the rear brake. Take your time with this stage and practise it until the rear brake becomes your natural reaction

to a high front wheel. If you do, your chances of flipping will decrease greatly.

STAGE 3

Now it's time for you to get comfortable riding your bike with the front wheel up so high it's at the balance point. That's why you can carry such a high wheelie at such a slow speed. This is not a power wheelie but rather all about balance and control. Once you get the front wheel up to the balance point you then have to try to keep it there with a combination of throttle, clutch and rear brake. If it comes up too high you need to ride a very slight amount of rear brake; if it starts to drop you'll have to add just a tiny bit of throttle and clutch. That's what it's all about; just keeping the front wheel at the balance point and carrying it along. 



YAMAHA JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT TEAM

WORDS AARYN MINERDS

Yamaha Australia has arguably the strongest and longest-running junior development program in Australian motocross.

With dedicated junior teams in each state led by experienced coaches and past champions of the sport, selection as part of a state-based Yamaha junior squad is highly sought after and certainly gives young riders a big leg up in the world of motocross and supercross.

With the concept originally starting with Glenn Macdonald back in 2000-2001, the program has morphed into a national success story, paving the way for riders to develop from the state-based teams into a potential ride with the national Yamalube Yamaha Racing Under 19s team and onwards to Yamaha's senior national-backed teams with Serco Yamaha, DPH Motosports and the highly accomplished CDR Yamaha team.

We caught up with Yamaha's national Under 19s team manager and Queensland Yamaha Junior team



boss Scott Bishop to get more of an insight on how the program works, the type of rider selected onto the state-based teams, the support provided and what's expected from a team rider.

First of all, Scott, how, when and where did the Yamaha junior program come to life?

The Yamaha Junior Development Team concept started in the year 2000 when Glenn Macdonald got together with Yamaha in Victoria to start a junior program. It was up and running in 2001 with four riders, one being Kade Mosig.

Coincidentally, a similar thing started in Queensland at the same time. It was completely independent of the Victorian team and had Ford Dale as its star rider. Stephen Gall had some involvement here and again it was a four-rider team with some outside sponsorship.

But it wasn't until the end of 2005 when Yamaha decided to make it a national program with SA [and] NSW joining and some managers put in place to assist with sponsors and rider development and everyone was on the same page. So, 2017 is the 12th year of Yamaha Junior Racing and the program continues to grow.

What's the main benefit of having a state-based team with an experienced coach and former rider to guide riders through their junior racing days?

Having a state-based team was a way to enable us to have a more hands-on role with the development of riders instead of just handing them a bike along with some product and saying, "Now, come back and talk to us at the end of the year." It put Yamaha in a position to be more serious about taking on a role to develop a rider from a young age. It was designed to give riders more mentoring and teach them some of the ins and outs of the industry both on and off the track.

Looking at the teams across the states, they vary in the number of riders and the age of those riders from year to year. How are riders selected to be on each team?

The managers put in place in each state are experienced motorcycle people, be they from a racing, coaching and even a management background, but all have a national-level racing background.

From their experience they all have an eye for talent, so in large part the riders on each state team are selected by the individual state manager. In general, most riders start with the state-based teams in the 85cc class at nine or 10 years of age, though there have been times where riders are brought on in the 65cc age group.

What type of support do the riders receive? Does the support grow the longer they stay with the team or is the support the same from day one as it is when they race their final year on the junior team?

Riders are rewarded as they go. You can't hand a nine-year-old three bikes, 10 sets of gear and 20 sets of tyres in their first year or there's no reason or motivation for the rider to improve. At the age of nine or 10, a rider comes in and you try to guide them while keeping them within their parental unit, help them through their race days and build their relationship with them.

What are some of the major benefits for a rider being on a state-based team?

First up, for a young rider the product support is huge with bikes, gear and a lot of product in place. It does take a large part of the financial burden off the rider's family. [Also], being surrounded by people



with a high level of racing experience there to assist and guide you in the direction that you want to go. If there's a question you have, there's a direct answer. It takes a lot of the guesswork out of a young rider's development and he or she has someone who's been there and been in the same or similar situations before and knows what does and doesn't work. The hands-on development is probably the biggest benefit from a riding point of view.

What are the expectations of the riders both on and off the track?

Results are great but they're not the be-all and end-all. When we select a young rider we're not going out to pick up 10 Ken Roczens and pick a bag of junior titles, especially when you're looking at the younger riders. The expectations are for riders to present themselves well, communicate well and respect the products and the people that are supporting you. From there as the rider progresses it's about the riding – becoming a better rider and racer.

The riders selected are generally riders with good results and the main goal in the first 12 months is for them to be a better rider than when they first come onto the team. For the most part, if you look at the history of the state Yamaha teams, that's what happens and is the reason why you don't see a large turnover in junior riders. It's about continuing to help them grow with continued support.

Yamaha also has a very well-structured national race presence in Australia starting with the national Under

19s team, the MX/SX2 Serco Yamaha team, the MX/SX1 CDR Yamaha team and now the DPH Motosports team giving riders the opportunity to continue to progress with Yamaha after the junior career is finished.

How successful has that transition from junior state rider to national level senior rider been over the years?

The results of the program have certainly showed that there's a natural progression from being on a state-based team before moving up on to the national Under 19s team and beyond with the factory-supported Serco Yamaha, DPH Yamaha and CDR Yamaha teams.

Last year's national MX2 champion Jed Beaton came through the program with the junior Victorian team before moving up to the national team to race the MXD class. He then spent a season at Serco before capturing the senior national championship with Yamaha on the DPH Motorsport team.

Wilson Todd is now on that same path and there have been a lot of riders before them who've taken the same path over the years. Young Hunter Lawrence was on that same path before being picked up to race overseas after his results at the world junior championships aboard a Yamaha YZ125.

History has shown that a rider who starts with one of our junior state teams and continues to progress as a racer on-track, along with showing respect and growth off-track, will progress all the way through to having some great opportunities at the national senior level and beyond. 



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WET WHEELING

A BIT OF RAIN NEVER HURT — A LOT OF RAIN IS A PAIN IN THE ARSE

WORDS DAMO PICS HARRY CRASHITFIRST

As Matt will attest in his report on our project KTM 500EXC-F, it's done not much but piss down for the last month. We went from riding in 40 degrees to riding in 40mm of slop. What happened to summer? I don't mind getting wet, though; in fact, it's a bit of an obsession. Point me to a puddle and I'll spend an hour playing like a toddler.

I left the bike with the guys at MSC for a couple of weeks so they could take measurements for a steering damper, which I'll be keen to try once it's popped out of their insane machinery. After I picked it up, I replaced the front brake disc and pads with a braking disc and braking pads from Steve Cramer Products. With only a hint of sunshine, I was kitted to go hit the trails when I was summoned to the office, which, as usual, was a poor substitute for riding.

The next day, the rains returned but I couldn't wait any longer and we hit the trails. The braking disc has a nice feel to it, although I'm not a fan of the GYTR brake lever. It's not the sort of feel under the fingers that I like and I'll be looking to replace that pretty soon for something a bit stiffer and with a different profile. I might actually go back to the stock lever, which I reckon is a baller.

If there's ever a time to be thankful you used the Power Tuner and installed the Hollis Map (traction map), it's when it's wet and slippery. It makes it so much easier to control the power and keep traction than in stock trim.

Check out the sidebar for more information on what settings you need to run to get the most compliant rear-wheel-to-dirt relationship. **DA** //

THROTTLE %

THROTTLE %	FUEL			IGNITION		
	1	5	3	0	-2	2
2	4	2	-1	-2	1	
2	2	2	-1	-2	1	
RPMs						





READY TO POWER UP

CHASING SUN AND POWERPARTS SHOPPING FOR THE KTM 500 EXC

STORY MATT BERNARD PHOTOGRAPHY KATRINA BERNARD

Rain, rain, go away! It's been a frustrating month to have a KTM 500 EXC sitting in the garage – it's non-stop bloody rain in Sydney of late. Luckily, the trails I frequent have a nice sandy base so, when the sun did come out for a weekend, it was straight out and into the bush.

It was all smiles on the 500 EXC for that sunny Saturday. Smashing sandy trails and attacking erosion mounds, the 500 just eats it up.

I've definitely decided there's a few things I'd like to change to try to make it a little more comfortable. As mentioned last month, I'm booked in to visit the guys at MCD Racing in Penrith to get the suspension firmed up a little and I'm overdue for that now.

Becoming more comfortable and confident on the bike, I'm pushing harder and creating the odd bottom-out. The bike turns very well so it will be a juggling act to add a firmer feeling without affecting the steering or plushness. Luckily, the guys at MCD are wizards!

While the rain's been falling I've been looking closely at the KTM Powerparts catalogue. It's time to give this bike a birthday. Here are five things we've spotted in the catalogue that we'd like to use on our big Kato.

MAP SWITCH

One of the most talked-about features of the KTM 500 EXC at the world media launch was that the extremely powerful bike was equipped with traction control. To use this, the Powerparts Map Switch is needed and is absolutely 100 per cent at the top of our list from the catalogue.

FACTORY CLUTCH COVER

The standard cover has a few wear marks on it now but by no means does it look scrappy. These factory clutch covers from KTM are very, very cool and would look trick on the 500 EXC.

STEP-UP SEAT

The KTM 500 EXC has some serious poke. When you twist the throttle and give it a big squirt it's easy to slide down the bike a little. This seat is of standard height but features a step at the rear underneath the gripper material. This keeps the standard seat nice and fresh for resale as well.

AKRAPOVIC SLIP ON

The KTM 500 EXC has more than enough power but it would be nice to get a little more bark out of the exhaust note, save some weight and maybe add an extra bit of excitement to the beast.

SUPERMOTO SETUP

I'd really like to have a crack at some supermotard riding and events and I think the 500 would be the ultimate bike to get into the scene. Being registered, it would be nice for a rip up the winding roads around my



house. It's a fairly expensive setup but it would be ideal to be able to swap between motard and trailbike over a couple of beers.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Greg "Hop" Masters has just picked up the KTM 500 EXC and headed to Louee for a Saturday blast. He's been off the trails for a few months and is excited to get onto the beast and spend a day putting it through its paces. So, next month, along with our regular update clicking into another gear, Hop will take us through his day on the KTM across a range of terrains. **DAW**

Follow us @dirtactionmag

KADE MOSIG

PHOTO DAMIEN ASHENHURST

Kade is one of those riders you'd like to be just for a day on the track. His aggression, style and all-round skill set are enviable and to top it off he's not a complete knob jockey – he's a good dude. Now that he's with the DPH Yamaha team this could be the truly big year he's been waiting for. Kade has every tool he needs to win and the team has shown it can produce the goods on race day. Nothing's easy at that end of the motocross track and there will be no letting up in 2017, but a heap of fans will be stoked to see this guy take the top step throughout the series.







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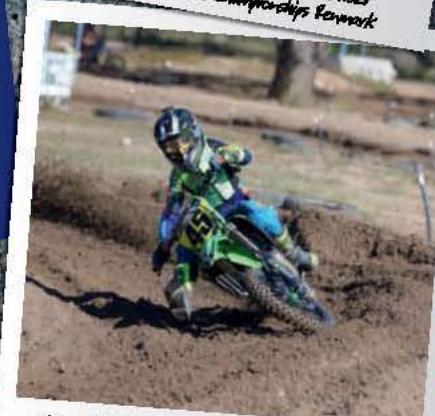
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